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VOL. 35.—No. 35.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29, 1857.

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A MEMOIR OF ROBSON,

BIOGRAPHICAL AND DRAMATIC,

By JOHN V. BRIDGEMAN.

THERE was once a time when we were not partial to Margate; in fact, to tell the honest truth, we heartily disliked it. If any one had asked us which English watering-place we should most like *not* to visit, we should have immediately and emphatically replied, Margate. We abominated its sands, in our opinion, so inferior to those at Ramsgate; we objected to its bathing system, the principal objects of which struck us as being to place the machines containing the ladies in as close proximity as possible to those appropriated to the gentlemen, and so to arrange them that the most perfect view of all the bathers, both male and female, might be afforded to the persons on the shore; we were annoyed at its flaunting, gim-crack shops, and its ostentatious, glaring hotels; we entertained feelings of aversion for its bazaar and other establishments, ironically called places of public amusement; and we abhorred those human boa-constrictors, its land-ladies, who are enabled to exist all the winter in a state of torpor, from the fact of their having gorged so many victims during what they designate the season.

But a change has come o'er the spirit of our dream. At present we like Margate—nay, more, we are absolutely fond of it. It was only the other day that we perused, not merely without discomfort but with great satisfaction, a rather lengthy guide-book of the place, albeit the said book was not remarkable for any peculiar graces of style. Indeed we may conscientiously assert, without fear of contradiction—especially as we do not intend naming the work in question more nearly—that the direct reverse was the case. The printing, too, was rather Catnachy, if we may be allowed to coin a word for the occasion, and the paper anything but first-rate. Still we read with great gusto how Margate two hundred years ago was called Meregate, and was the first town in the Isle of Thanet; how the first stone of the present pier was laid on the 6th April, 1810; how the parish church, dedicated to St. John, stands on the north-east side of the town; how the bathing machines were invented by Benjamin Beale, a member of the Society of Friends (more shame for him); how, etc., etc.

And to what was this wonderful change in our opinion of the town attributable? To the fact that Robson was born in Margate; that he lived in Margate; that he was bred up in Margate. The knowledge of this caused the place to be invested for us with all kinds of attractions which never before existed, but which then budded forth, just as the leaves burst out on the trees, under the influence of the spring sun, rendering green and beautiful what was previously bare and desolate. We have wandered about the streets, we have rambled on the jetty, and we have paced the pier, calling up, while we did so, the figure of Robson, as a little boy, in all sorts of situations: we fancied we saw him, in our mind's eye, watching the arrival of the boats; and, with the vivacity peculiar to him, whiling away the time till they arrived, by trying to push his juvenile companions down the steps of the jetty, or, occasionally, pitching their caps into the sea;—had he not thus found some safety valve or other to let off a little of his exuberant spirits, that boy would never have attained man's estate: he would have blown up or burst; we pictured him playing in the gutter; we beheld him looking for crabs on the beach, or witnessing, with intense admiration, the performances of that wonderful representative of the drama, Mr. Punch, on the Marine Parade. We could, also, perceive him undergoing castigation from the hand of his anxious parent, on his return home, for having been so immersed in his contemplation of the above exciting performance as to have forgotten the flight of time, and kept the dinner waiting, or been too late for tea. As we are wont sometimes to pace the quiet, old-fashioned courts of the Temple, thinking of Oliver Goldsmith—poor Noll—in the plum-coloured suit of which he was so proud; or as we look at Temple Bar, and think of Dr. Johnson, leaning on the post near it, shaking his burly sides with uncontrollable laughter, and exciting the wonderment and anger of the watch, so do we now walk about Margate. There is, how-

ever, one consoling reflection in our meditations. Goldsmith and Johnson are dead and gone; Robson still lives, long, we trust, to instruct and to delight.

Frederick Robson was born at Margate in the year 1821. He is, consequently, thirty-six years of age. From his earliest youth he had a great partiality for the stage. When he was only five years old, his mother brought him up to London, and took him to the Coburg Theatre, now known as the Victoria. The entertainments consisted of a piece called the *Youthful Queen*, a farce entitled the *Green Dragon*, a number of comic songs sung by Mr. Sloman, and the *White Devil*; or, *Villany Detected*. The last production made an immense impression on the future actor's mind. He thought it the finest production to which human ingenuity had ever given birth, and we question whether, even now, in his "heart of hearts," he has not a very exalted opinion of it, just as the hero of Theodore Hook's *Gilbert Gurney* considered the cakes he used to purchase of the old dame at school superior to aught that ever issued from Gunter's. Perhaps, if Robson were to see the piece again, as Gilbert Gurney tasted the cakes in after life, he might change his opinion. The first result of his visit to the Coburg was a mental resolve to have a theatre of his own. For two long years, unmindful of the charms of hardbake, or the attraction of Bonaparte's ribs—then a favorite sweetmeat among the juvenile classes of the community—he religiously saved up every farthing of his limited pocket-money, and of the occasional presents he received. He watched his hoard accumulating penny by penny, until, at last, he had amassed sufficient to buy a little stage, on which he got up *The Forest of Bondy*. But he feared that his mother would oppose his theatrical tendencies, and, accordingly, in the same manner that Handel used to play the harpsichord at night in a garret, without the knowledge of his father, Robson was accustomed to paint his scenes and cut out his characters, "one penny plain, and twopence coloured," without any one in the house knowing aught about it. When his preparations were complete, he announced the fact to some intimate friends of his own age, and invited them, under a pledge of strict secrecy, to witness the performance. His success was complete. His efforts were highly praised by his audience, and he was the more gratified because he had to play all the parts himself.

But his little theatre did not satisfy him long. He aimed at something higher, and we are sorry to say that, in carrying out his views, he was not very particular about playing truant. Many a time, when supposed to be at school, he was loitering about the stage-door of the Margate Theatre. He took a particular liking to the low comedian of the company. This gentleman's name was Mr. Stubbs. Robson found out where Mr. Stubbs lived, and used to be transported to the seventh heaven of delight when able to act the part of amateur ticket-porter, and carry Mr. Stubbs's sword, wig, or any other small properties, from that individual's lodgings to the theatre. During his visits to the door of this establishment, he observed that the actors and actresses, when going to rehearsal, had small pieces of paper, and rolls of manuscript in their hands. He discovered that the small pieces of paper were what are technically entitled "calls," that is to say, summonses from the stage-manager or prompter for the various members of the company to attend at such an hour and such a day for the rehearsal of a new piece. The rolls of manuscript were their parts. Robson was not contented until he, too, had a small piece of paper, and a roll of Bath post in his hand. There was not a word written on them, but what did that matter? They looked like the real thing, and he used to walk about with them in his hand until, by dint of perseverance, he fancied he was really and truly an actor, just as the dervishes carry on their impositions so long, that they finally believe themselves under the direct influence of divine inspiration.

But, like nearly all who have afterwards become celebrated on the stage, Robson was, at first, destined for another profession, and apprenticed to an engraver in London. His master, however, failed, and ran away, leaving him, yet a mere boy, to shift for himself, and struggle on as best he might. Robson now directed his thoughts more strongly than ever

to the drama. He determined to make it the means of his livelihood. True, he had already had a foretaste of the difficulties which would beset his path. He had on one occasion applied for permission to act a small part at the private theatre in Catherine-street, Strand, with a company of amateurs who have long since comfortably settled down in the oblivion from which they never emerged. The answer he got was not highly encouraging. "You are not fit to play. You are too small. They would not see you over the gas lamps." "Never mind," said Robson, "I will try!"

This reminds us of a somewhat similar observation addressed by the stately Mrs. Siddons to Edmund Kean, when he was only a poor stroller. Kean had played some character or other at a provincial theatre with the great actress, and played it so well, that after the performance she went up to him and said, "You have played very well, sir, *very* well! It is a pity there's too little of you to do anything." Mrs. Siddons seems to have forgotten that size is not always the test of value. A real brilliant emits incomparably more lustre than a paste diamond, however large. Need we remind the reader that one of the greatest conquerors the world ever produced—namely, Napoleon I.—was also a small man?

Luckily, though others did not believe in him, Robson, like Edmund Kean, believed in himself. His indomitable will, which is one of his chief characteristics, and of which we shall have occasion to speak often in this brief memoir, was not to be crushed. Though, perhaps, discouraged, he was not hopelessly cast down. He had determined to be an actor, and be an actor he would. On the 12th May, 1842, he made his first appearance as Simon Mealbag in *Grace Huntley*, at the private theatre above-mentioned. We believe his efforts were not very highly appreciated; on the contrary, he was rather pooh-poohed. But this could no more restrain Robson, than a pack-thread could hold a New York steamer to her moorings, when her steam is up, and her paddle-wheels revolve. His steam was up, and his paddle-wheels had revolved. He found that, with all his exertions, he was not likely to make a fortune at his profession as an engraver. He thought that, if he must starve, he had as much right to choose the mode of starvation that pleased him most, as the Duke of Clarence had to select a butt of malmsey as the means of his death. He no longer hesitated, but, throwing away his graver, followed the irresistible bent of his inclinations and boldly passed the Rubicon of his life.

The prospect on this side that imaginary boundary was, for a considerable distance, anything but exhilarating. His first engagement was at Whitstable, a small town, and the port of Canterbury, eighty-eight miles from London geographically, but, as Robson discovered, many thousands professionally. The inhabitants are mostly engaged in the oyster trade, and appear, during Robson's stay among them at least, to have been so immersed in their calling as to have had no time or wish to patronise the drama. This accounts for a very remarkable fact in theatrical annals. The manager had engaged Robson at a salary of sixteen shillings a-week, but contented himself with giving him, for the first month, the smaller sum of five. At one period during his stay in Whitstable, Robson was in such utter want as to be driven to the last extremity. One day—he had tasted no food that day—he and the "band" (one violin) determined to see whether they could not make a little money by a private speculation of their own. They accordingly walked from Whitstable to Canterbury, a distance of eight miles, with the intention of doing something or other, the "band" with his fiddle, and Robson with his comic songs. It was a matter of desperation, and Robson swore he would even go into a public house and sing while his companion accompanied him on his instrument. On reaching Canterbury, the "band" struck up outside a tavern near the barracks. Robson endeavoured to fulfil his part of the compact, but in vain:

"Der Mensch denkt,
Gott lenkt."

His misery, and the sense of degradation that oppressed him, were too much. His tongue clove to the roof of his mouth; his throat was convulsively contracted. Unable to articulate a single sound he burst into a flood of bitter tears. Poverty is eminently

compassionate. The "band" did not utter a single reproach, but led him silently from the spot. As they were departing, Robson's foot hit against something. He stooped to see what it was, and, to his mingled astonishment and delight, found it to be twopence wrapped up in a piece of paper. A penny loaf and half a pint of beer were immediately purchased and shared by Robson and the "band." They then walked back to Whitstable—another eight miles—deeply impressed, if ever men were, that "there is a special providence in the fall of a sparrow." On his return to his lodgings, Robson found a post-office order, sent by a dear friend, for one pound!

This, however, could not last for ever, and, when it was spent, the manager did not become more regular in his payments than he had previously been. How Robson managed to live is a mystery, and though it is a very trite saying that no one can live upon air, Robson seems to have lived on it, or on hope, which is pretty much the same thing. He did not like the diet however. In all probability it grew rather monotonous. *Toujours perdrix* is not desirable; so he determined on removing to some locality where the drama was more liberally patronised. He went accordingly to Faversham, another seaport town in the county of Kent. It is situated on a branch of the river Swale, and stands half-a-mile from the main road from London to Dover. It consists chiefly of two irregular streets, crossing each other at right angles, with a market-place and town-hall at the point of intersection. Like the inhabitants of Whitstable, the people of Faversham devote their energies to oyster fishing. Faversham cannot boast of a theatre. It possesses, however, or used to possess, down a turning out of one of its two streets, a pig-stye, and, over this pig-stye, a loft. In that loft Robson used to play. He was, no doubt, gaining experience, but that was nearly all he was gaining, for, when the receipts came to be divided, his share amounted to twopence a-night. Union is strength, we are told. At any rate the members of the company appeared to have believed the maxim, for they were in the habit of clubbing their means together to do what they could not do singly, namely—exist. They used, for instance, to subscribe a half-penny a piece for breakfast. Fancy the scene in the loft, over the pig-stye, of a morning—a far more curious and instructive scene than any which these strolling votaries of the sock and buskin might have enacted the night before. Look at them! Are they not as ragged and poverty-stricken a set of tatterdemalions as Callot ever painted? Mark the young man who in the play talks of bestowing his immense fortune and his hand on Julia, "dear, beloved Julia." Note the old uncle who has returned from India, with a large liver and untold wealth, the former for the especial behoof of his physician and the latter for the exclusive benefit of his orphan niece, who is thus suddenly an heiress and marries "Sir Charles." Their faces are haggard and worn. Their outer garments are threadbare, and their linen is—well, their linen is problematical. Still they are not so wretched as anyone might imagine they would be. They seem fully to carry out the theory contained in the fishwoman's observation as to the eels she was skinning. In other words, they appear accustomed to starvation. They have come to look upon it as a necessary condition of life,

*Paupertatemque ferendo
Efficere levem.*

Stewed up as they are in that loft, they are simmering there over the slow fire of hope, little knowing, poor creatures, how much misery must be melted down, like the strange substances the alchemist used to cast into his crucible; how much dross, in the shape of human life and human suffering, must be skimmed off the surface, and cast aside as of no account, in order that a little of the pure metal, the virgin gold, success, shall remain.

But a comparatively better time was at hand. The fair was approaching. Robson and his companions determined to leave their loft and remove to the market-place, under the Town-hall. They procured from the fishermen the loan of some sails, with which they set about enclosing the said market-place and erecting a theatre. As Propertius says, as if expressly for them:—

Pendebant vela theatro.

We can imagine Robson working away with all the energy for which he is remarkable, at the canvass fabric. At last the fair took place, and they commenced operations, performing from two o'clock in the day until ten at night, for an hour each time. This was rather severe labour, and must, we should say, have been somewhat detrimental to the voice, as well as fatiguing generally. But what of that. They were boring down, undaunted by the difficulties in their way to the artesian well of wealth. Robson's share for the three days of the fair was—start not, reader, it is a fact—eighteen shillings! We should like to know what he would have said had any one then ventured to hint that the stage was not a lucrative profession. Eighteen shillings for three days! As Dominie Sampson says, "Prodigious!"

Fortune, however, soon grew out of breath with such a run of luck as this. Affairs quickly relapsed into their unpromising state, and when matters do not even promise, which it is so easy to do, they must indeed be bad. Robson quitted Faversham, and, taking a long flight, for until now he had kept very near his native place, reached Watford, in Hertfordshire. But though he had changed his locality he had not altered his circumstances. He took them with him, as a Yorkshireman does his dialect, for the simple reason, that he could not leave them behind. Fate still frowned on him, and misery still followed him like a shadow, the worst kind of shadow—a shadow without any sunshine, with not even a stray ray, to produce it. But Robson still clung to the profession of his choice with as much tenacity as ever; it was, indeed, but a tiny plank, but he had the firm conviction it would, some day or other, land him in safety. The greater the barriers in his way, the stronger invariably was his determination to surmount them. Like the giant of classical history, his strength seemed to be renewed every time he met with a fall. He played in the back room of public-houses; he sang comic songs; he travelled about doing the "parade," as it is technically called, that is, walking up and down the platform erected in front of the booth, and sharing in the *al fresco* performances which take place there, and which, something like the savoury odour that issues from the cook's shops, are, so to speak, allowed to exude from inside, as if it were absolutely impossible to confine within the circumscribed limits of the frail erection, all the good things intended for the public. Among his other duties on the "parade," Robson had to invite the assembled yokels outside to "Walk up, walk up," and sometimes to act as money-taker. On one occasion, while he was engaged in this capacity, a boy, whose love for theatrical entertainments was greater than his pecuniary means of gratifying it, ascended the steps, and stated his desire to witness the performance, but added such a thing would be impossible, unless Robson would consent to receive, in lieu of the ordinary price of admission in the legal currency of the realm, a small brooch. Robson took the brooch; not a very valuable article, as the reader may suppose; not such an object as Hunt and Roskell would send, either for its intrinsic value or artistic finish, as a specimen of their productions to any Art Exhibition whatever; the brooch was a common brooch, and not even the most brazen-faced inhabitant of Wardour-street—that stale thoroughfare, where the odours that greet our nose strike us as having more claim to high antiquity than most of the so-called curiosities in the shops—not even, we repeat, the most brazen-faced inhabitant of Wardour-street would dare to assert the brooch was a gem. But any one would be much mistaken in supposing Robson would value it more highly had it been the master-piece of Benvenuto Cellini himself. He has never parted with it; the poor little brooch is still in his possession, so crystallized round with the recollection of privations endured and obstacles overcome, that it sparkles and glitters in his eyes at least, more dazzlingly and beautifully than the purest diamond that ever graced a royal diadem. Robson may look upon that brooch as his cross of the Legion of Honour, won bravely in his struggle with Poverty, and her twin-sister—Neglect. Another relic of the same period is the coat which he used to wear on the "parade." Those who have seen him in *Catching a Mermaid* at the Olympic, and heard him sing the "Country Fair," will, perhaps, not take less interest in the performance on learning that the coat in which he appears is the identical coat in question.

Meanwhile, the accomplishment of his first great day-dream was fast approaching. In the midst of all his distress, he had never utterly despaired. Did he intuitively feel, perhaps, that privation is as necessary a condition of a great dramatic reputation as darkness is of the efficacy of hydrocyanic acid? Did he bear his hard lot without repining, because he knew that the higher he wished eventually to rear the fabric of his fame, the lower and deeper must necessarily be the foundation on which that fabric should repose? At any rate, he had allowed the first few layers time to settle, and determined to push on with another story. He resolved to make a bold move, and get enrolled as a member of a certain strolling company, known as Jackman's Company. For years he had thought of Jackman's Company: it was "respectable," and the pay was sure. To belong to it was then the height of his ambition.

See, yonder, midway on the road between Watford and Uxbridge, that young man trudging along! What is he? He is not a countryman; his costume is very different from that peculiar to the rustics of England; he is not a mechanic; he is not, in the eyes of the world, at least, a gentleman, or he is a very poor one, which comes to about the same thing, for it is with the world now-a-days as it was nineteen hundred years ago:

Et genus et virtus, nisi cum re,
Vilior alga est.

His clothes are worn and soiled. He looks tired, too, although there is now and then a glance—bright, searching, and quick—which flashes from his eye, and tells you that, tired though he may be, nothing would prevent his walking on, on, on, for many a weary mile more, were such a course necessary for the accomplishment of any object he had in view—nothing, except his lying down to die of utter exhaustion in a ditch! He slackens his pace a little as he hears that small roadside public-house. The sun strikes hot upon him. He is going in to get some refreshment. He stops—but only for a moment. He again trudges on as before. Perhaps he has not money enough for a pint of beer and a crust of bread-and-cheese, for look!—a little further on, he turns out of the highway and pursues his course towards the water-cress beds which border it. Is he dining on the water-cresses? Ay; dining and breakfasting as well. He has eaten nothing that day. That simple repast of water-cresses, with a draught of clear water from the stream, was not such a bad meal after all, at least not in the estimation of him who made it, for it was most deliciously flavoured by the consciousness that he could have entered the public-house had he chosen; that he could have had his ale and his bread and cheese, had he not preferred, before he set out, to give all the money he possessed in the world—we will not say how small a sum it was—to one near and dear to him at home. The jaded pedestrian was Robson. We have forgotten, by-the-by, to inform the reader that our hero had, after quitting Whitstable, got married. Malthus would, doubtless, have been shocked at this, and many respectable people will say it was a foolish act. We, however, beg to differ with them. When a man is happy enough to possess a good, fond, loving wife, his sorrows and misery are only half as hard to bear, for she bravely takes an equal share of them, while his good fortune seems increased a thousand fold by the fact of her participating in it.

The jaded pedestrian, we repeat, was Robson. He had heard that Jackman's troop was at Uxbridge, and had accordingly started off to have an interview with Jackman himself. On his arrival he was unable to find Jackman, who was not with his company. No one knew whether he had gone. Some persons would have given up in disgust or despair. Not so Robson. He had come to Uxbridge to see Jackman, and was resolved not to quit it without accomplishing his object. All day did he wander up and down, visiting every nook and corner in the town, but without success. At last, when further search seemed useless, he met the manager in the street. He did not know him. He had never seen him before in his life; but, on observing a little farmer-looking man, something within his breast suggested to our persevering explorer that that little man was the individual of whom he was in search. Robson went up to him at once, accosted him, and found he was not mistaken. He stated why he had come over, and, after some conversation,

was engaged at the magnificent salary of twelve shillings a-week. He walked back to Watford with a heart as light as his purse. He now belonged to a "respectable" company. His first day-dream was accomplished.

On joining Jackman's company, he was inspired by the great amelioration in his position, and devoted himself with more ardour than ever to his duties. How hard he worked, and what satisfaction he gave may be inferred from the fact that, at the expiration of three weeks, Mr. Jackman, unsolicited, raised his hebdomodal salary from twelve to fifteen shillings. An increase of three shillings may strike many as a trifling sum, but they should recollect it was bestowed unasked. The amount itself, although by no means unacceptable, was not so much an object; it was the fact of its being a recognition of his talent that rendered it valuable in Robson's eyes. He remained with Mr. Jackman till Christmas, 1843, when he was obliged to quit him on account of ill-health. For a moment he was beaten, and who can wonder at it? Who, that has had to fight and battle with the world, can be astonished at such a result? Possessed of health, a determined man can effect almost anything; he laughs at obstacles, and scorns danger: but let illness strike him down, let it not only affect his body, but unbrace his nerves, and prostrate his mental faculties, and the brave sword—his strong will—on which he trusted to carve his way to fortune, falls from his palsied grasp. Robson came up to London for advice, and luckily derived great benefit from it. On his recovery, he went to Tonbridge Wells, where he played two nights, but, as the scale of remuneration did not suit him—he got nothing for his two performances—he took his departure at once, and again came to London, that great centre of the actor's hopes. After a short interval, he was engaged for low comedy at the Old Standard Theatre, on a salary of twelve shillings a week. But the salary was merely nominal, for he never got a farthing. He now thought of returning to the country. His hopes of success in London were disappointed, and, with a heavy heart, he was about setting off, when Mr. Rouse, the proprietor of the Grecian Saloon, having heard a good account of his talent, sent for, and engaged him, to go on to dance in ballets, and, in fact, to do anything that was required. Again did he pluck up courage. His confidence in himself, well nigh shaken, became stronger than ever. His second day-dream had been to procure an engagement at this very Grecian Saloon. He had done so. The summit of his hopes was reached when he played *Wormwood* in the *Lottery Ticket*, on Mr. Rouse's stage.

He soon became a general favorite, clearing with ease by the sale of tickets, as much as £50 at his benefit. But nothing is so nourishing to hopes and aspirations as success: they thrive upon it wonderfully, as aldermen do on turtle, and increase in size to a surprising extent; like the clothes of quickly growing boys, the circumstances that once fitted them very well soon become exceedingly tight at the waist, short at the wrists, and narrow at the ankles. Despite the comparatively pecuniary affluence and high position he had achieved in the opinion of the inhabitants of the City Road and its environs, Robson sighed for something else. His great hope now was that Mr. Henry Bedford, for whom he entertained a most profound respect and admiration, and who was, at that epoch, an immense favorite in Dublin, might obtain a good engagement, a splendid engagement at a London theatre, while he himself might take his place in the capital of the Emerald Isle. But mind—Henry Bedford must get a first-rate offer from a London manager, otherwise Robson would wish him to stop at Dublin all his life. At last, Henry Bedford did leave Dublin, and did come to London, and Robson, after having been with Mr. Rouse six years, left the Grecian, and was engaged at the Queen's Theatre, Dublin, October 28th, 1850. As we have said, he had been playing in the City Road for six years, and yet in 1850 who at the West End ever knew his name. It is true that, from time to time, strange reports penetrated as far as the clubs, or the ears of dramatic critics, to the effect that a very extraordinary actor was playing at the Grecian, but such reports were treated with the same indifference and even scorn by the general public as was Sir Walter Raleigh's assertion of the existence of an

El Dorado, in the days of the man-queen, Elizabeth, and the pedant, James. Recent discoveries have proved Sir Walter Raleigh was not the mere wild enthusiast that pompous strong-minded individuals, only a very short time since, considered him. California and Australia have demonstrated that, after all, there was something in his notion of an El Dorado. In a similar manner, time has shown that the accounts of what was going on at the Grecian were not exaggerated, and that there was a dramatic El Dorado there, though no one would believe it.

Though afterwards one of the greatest favourites who ever played before a Dublin audience, Robson was at first not popular. Do what he could, the public remained cold. A select few, who had the pleasure of knowing him personally, used to amuse themselves by walking home with him to his lodgings, after the play was over, smoking his tobacco, drinking his whiskey, and keeping him up to all hours in the morning, for the purpose of informing him he was not a patch upon Harry Bedford, and would never be an actor. This was frank and sincere, no doubt, but cannot have been agreeable. Robson, however, said nothing in reply, but *did* all the more. In fact, he might take for his motto the phrase "Deeds not words." He sometimes pays Dublin a visit now, and, whenever he does so, the theatre is incapable of containing the crowds that besiege its doors. Yet the backs of the boxes are removed so as to make room for extra rows of seats; the musicians are banished from the orchestra, and chairs are even placed at the wings on the stage to accommodate those who choose to pay something extra. Woe to the occupants of the said chairs, however, if, in their anxiety to see the great attraction of the evening, they crane forward sufficiently to be visible from the front of the house. The "Gallery-boys" will not stand any encroachment on their privileges, any contempt of their authority, or any appearance of disrespect. The unhappy delinquents are glad to draw back immediately. The volley of hisses that greets them might otherwise be only the forerunner of a shower of something heavier.

When he had been three years in Dublin, Robson was deep in another day-dream. He felt his own powers; he knew he had gained experience, and thought he might venture to appear before a London audience. He knew there would shortly be a vacancy at the Olympic Theatre, in consequence of the approaching secession, from Mr. Farren's company, of that great favourite and admirable actor, Mr. Compton. He was aware of this, but he did not think of writing to Mr. Farren, and offering to take Mr. Compton's place. The idea of being the leading comic actor at a recognised metropolitan theatre, struck him as something rather too preposterous, at any rate, for the present. One day, however, he received a letter from Mr. Farren himself, offering him the very position he coveted. He could scarcely believe his senses. He read the letter over and over again, until he could have got it by heart a hundred times. This, however, did not prevent his carrying the precious communication about with him, everywhere he went. Even when engaged at the theatre, in the evening, he used to take the letter out of his pocket, and devour its contents, whenever he had a moment to himself at the wings or in some dark corner of the stage. Is it necessary for us to inform the reader that Robson instantly replied, accepting Mr. Farren's terms? Had those terms—whatever they were—been ten times less, he would have agreed to them. He would have taken anything or nothing, rather than lose the chance thus presented to him.

He came to London. Everyone would suppose he instantly hurried off to his future manager. Nothing of the sort. It is true that he went to the theatre at once, but, on reaching the stage door, his heart failed him. He had not the pluck to enter. For some days he remained without daring to show himself. At last he hit upon a compromise. He summoned up courage to visit the theatrical agent, in Bow Street, who had recommended him, and in the room was Mr. Farren himself. How impressed Robson felt at finding himself in the presence of so deservedly renowned an artist, one who had played with John Kemble, with Mrs. Siddons, with Edmund Kean, and with

Charles Young; one who ranked among the brightest ornaments of the stage—how impressed Robson felt, we repeat, the reader may imagine. The result of the interview was that the negotiation was satisfactorily concluded, and, on leaving the agency office, Robson was engaged to play first low comedy at the Olympic. Perhaps there was not a happier man in the world at that moment. His last and grandest day-dream had been daguerreotyped by fate into reality—fixed ere it could fade away, and so truly and faithfully, that, looking at it with the microscope of time, we discover the most minute details, which at first escaped even Robson's eye perhaps: we see him not only appearing at the Olympic, but we see the Olympic resuming the position it occupied in the time of Mad. Vestris; we see Robson's fame extended over London—or rather over the United Kingdom; we see Robson's name as manager on the top of the bills. Was not all this part of his day-dream? Ay—we doubt not it was, and Fate duly reproduced it.

Robson made his bow at the Olympic Theatre on Easter Monday, 1853, in an adaptation from the French, entitled *Salvatore*. The after-piece was *Catching an Heiress*. Only one or two of the papers noticed the fact, however, and it created little or no sensation among the general mass of the play-going public. To all intents and purposes, his first appearance may be said to have taken place on the 25th of April—the evening that Mr. F. Talfourd's burlesque of *Macbeth* first saw the lights. Mr. Talfourd had already produced various works of this class, all remarkable for the daring and novel puns, smart jokes and pleasing parodies introduced in them. Mr. Talfourd strikes us as able to do whatever he chooses with the English language. He seems to have taken it under his especial training, and to have commenced by cutting out its back bone, so that at his command it will twist and turn about with a flexibility and ease enough to make Auriol retire into private life and Flexmore drown himself. Mr. Talfourd will take a single phrase, hold it up to his audience to show them that it contains nothing, tap it playfully to prove there is no deception, and then suddenly extract from it as many puns as the most accomplished magician or conjurer ever produced flowers from an apparently empty hat, or poured out glasses of wine from an inexhaustible bottle. The wonder is where they all come from. The great attraction, that evening, was not the actor, but the piece. The audience had come to see *Macbeth* and not to witness Robson. His appearance had not been heralded by any preparatory flourish; his fame had not preceded him; no one had ever heard anything about him. How many were in the house that evening who, before the burlesque began, wished in secret for the author's sake and their own, that the principal part had been confided to some known actor. At last, the new aspirant for public favour presented himself. He had not been on the stage long, before it was evident to every person of any discrimination whatever, that Mr. Farren had secured the services of one who was at least original, of one who dared to think for himself, and, what is more, was eminently capable of embodying his conceptions. There was no servile copying of old established favourites. Everything was new and bold in the extreme. We thought of Edmund Kean's first appearance in London, in the character of Shylock, and of his reply to the remark made condescendingly by the patronising stage-manager at rehearsal: "My dear sir, this will never do. This is not the way to play the part. It is different from anything we have ever seen." "I mean it to be different!" said the great actor. It was perfectly clear that Robson, too, like Kean, meant what he did to be "different" from aught the public had yet witnessed. The audience were taken by surprise. It was not the sort of burlesque acting to which they had hitherto been accustomed, but there was a strange, wild charm about it which they could not resist.

Could the new actor have heard what was said of him—outside the walls of the theatre, of course—the next morning, he would have felt he had achieved a great triumph, although there was no notice in the *Times* of it. But the notice was only deferred for a day. On Wednesday, April 27th, the "leading journal" after some highly complimentary remarks on Mr. Talfourd's piece, wrote as follows:

"But far more important than the burlesque itself, which has its light and heavy moments, is the performance of *Macbeth* by Mr. Robson, a low comedian, who has but recently joined the establishment. There is such an originality in this actor's humour, and his grotesque embellishments of the character show such a fund of comic invention, that we may consider his acting of the mock murderer as something more than promising. His peculiarity is that he really seems to be aware of the tragic foundation which lies at the bottom of the grotesque superstructure; and hence, however, extravagant the gestures and articulations, we find that they are odd expressions of a feeling intrinsically serious. The imitation of the dagger soliloquy, by some violent dumb show to the air of the *Pas des Poignards*, while excessively droll, has in it something of actual desperation; and the appearance of *Macbeth* after the murder is committed is marked by that caricatured horror which may sometimes be found in the works of those eccentric draughtsmen of the Calot breed who love to sport with things in themselves terrific. The *Macbeth* of Mr. Robson belongs to no recognised school of burlesque acting, but it is an original creation."

Nearly all the London press expressed similar sentiments. How gratifying must this have been for Robson! Many and many a night had he sat up—until the grey dawn warned him it was time to seek his bed—pondering over the effect that might be produced by playing burlesque in this forcible and earnest style. But he had never before had a chance. The favourable manner in which his efforts had been received when he was at last enabled to give the reins to his judgment proved he was right. He now, more than ever, felt confidence in himself, and confidence is as necessary to the full development of the powers of an actor as the genial warmth of the sun to the ripening of the fruits of the earth.

It would be superfluous to give a detailed account of Robson's career since the production of *Macbeth*. Who does not recollect the successive triumphs he achieved in *Shylock*, the *Wandering Minstrel*, and several other pieces during his first season? Who can forget the *Jem Baggs* mania which suddenly seized all London, when "Villikins and his Dinah" was ground upon every organ, and even made the subject of a separate farce at the Haymarket? What song had, for a long time, ever been so universally sung and played? What song *will* be so universally sung and played, except, indeed, it be "Poor Dog Tray," who, having been converted into mutton pies, as we are informed in R. Brough's *Masaniello*, is now in everybody's mouth. Who does not with pleasure call to mind Robson's wonderful delineation of the cringing, fawning, hypocritical, passionate Desmarests, in *Plot and Passion*; who can be oblivious of the *Yellow Dwarf*, and the *Discreet Princess*? By-the-way, the former of these pieces ran 122 nights, and was witnessed by the Queen four times, while the latter was performed from Christmas to the week before the Whitsuntide following, Her Majesty going to see it five times.

Upon the retirement of Mr. Wigan from the Olympic Theatre, Robson, in conjunction with Mr. Emden, entered upon the management, which we sincerely hope, and fully believe, will prove a most profitable one, both to the managers and the public, by bestowing fortune on the former and affording rational and innocent amusement to the latter. There is one thing, by the way, that we should do were we in Robson's present position. We should inform the authors who might write for us, that, because we had made a hit in one particular character, in depicting one particular passion, we did not wish every other character to be written after the same model, any more than we should desire all our nether garments, present and future, to be cut like that celebrated pair we once had from the famous West-end house of Scheere, Tuch, and Faden, and which, in conformity with the then prevalent taste, made us look as like a groom or an omnibus cad, about the legs, as it is possible to conceive. We should hint, also, to our authors that, as in agriculture, a rotation of crops is desirable, so a little variety is not unacceptable to an actor. To give an actor of any talent parts of the same description only, because he has produced a sensation in one, is to do him a gross injustice, and deprive him of the opportunity of displaying the versatility of his powers.

Before concluding this brief memoir, we will repeat a question which we ourselves, as well as many others, have often asked.

Great as Robson is in the branch of his profession to which he has hitherto devoted himself, is it not possible he might be quite as fine in another? Who that has ever witnessed the terrible impressiveness of his burlesque Shylock can doubt that he possesses the mind to conceive, and the artistic power to carry out the Shylock of Shakespere? Who will deny that Sir Giles Overreach might, in his hands, once more attain the popularity it enjoyed in the days of Edmund Kean? Why, in a word, should he not play tragedy as well as comedy? Garrick did; why should not Robson?

WORCESTER MUSICAL FESTIVAL.

THE attendance in the church on Tuesday morning—when full cathedral service was performed—was very large. About 1,100 persons assembled. The musical part of the service included the *preces* and *responses* by Tallis, chants of the same venerable composer to the "Venite" and "Jubilate," and one by the Rev. W. H. Havergal to the Psalms; Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum* (principal singers, Misses Dolby, Gilbert, and Palmer; Messrs. Montem Smith, Thomas, and Weiss); the 33rd Psalm, new version, arranged to a Gloucester tune; Mendelssohn's magnificent setting of the 55th Psalm, "Hear my prayer" (solo *soprano*, Mrs. Clare Hepworth); and Dr. Elvey's new anthem, "Sing, O heavens" (solos by Miss Palmer and Mr. Montem Smith), which was mentioned yesterday as having been composed expressly for this festival. Dr. Elvey conducted his own anthem. Altogether music played a more important part in the service than is always the case, the anthem of Mendelssohn being the chief attraction (if such a term may be used with reference to an act of worship), on account not only of its beauty and devotional feeling, but of its comparative novelty. The anthem of Dr. Elvey was very generally admired, and pronounced by good judges one of his ablest compositions.

The sermon of Canon C. F. Lewis (brother of the Chancellor of the Exchequer) was in illustration of the following text from Luke, chap. xii., verse 15:—

"He said, take heed, and beware of covetousness, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things that he possesseth."

That the eloquence of the reverend gentleman was not spent on deaf ears may be gathered from the consoling fact that the collection made at the doors for the charity amounted to the handsome sum of £259 10s. 3d.

There was a very good attendance in the evening in the College Hall at the first miscellaneous concert. As the programme offered an average example of the nature of these entertainments, we subjoin it:—

PART I.			
Symphony in A minor	...	...	Mendelssohn.
Duet—Madame and Mr. Weiss	...	...	Weiss.
Romance—Herr Formes (<i>L'Etoile du Nord</i>)	...	...	Meyerbeer.
Aria—Miss L. Vinning, "Tacea la notte"	...	...	Verdi.
Song—Mr. Sims Reeves, "I arise from dreams of thee"	...	...	H. Glover.
Fantasia Violin—M. Sainton	...	...	Sainton.
Canzonet—Miss Dolby, "The Spirit's Song"	...	...	Haydn.
Romanza—Sig. Gardoni (<i>L'Etoile du Nord</i>)	...	...	Meyerbeer.
Finale (<i>Loreley</i>) Solo—Madame Novello	...	...	Mendelssohn.
PART II.			
Cantata—(Robin Hood)	...	...	J. L. Hatton.
Ballad—Mr. Montem Smith	...	...	MS.
Song—Miss Dolby, "Three Fishers"	...	...	John Hullah.
Trio—Madame Novello, Madame Weiss, and Signor Gardoni (<i>Comte Ory</i>)	...	...	Rossini.
Aria—Herr Formes, "Non più andrai"	...	...	Mozart.
Ballad—Miss L. Vinning, "Home, sweet home"	...	...	Bishop.
Overture—(<i>Egmont</i>)	...	...	Beethoven.

The symphony was not played so well as we had a right to anticipate from so excellent a band; there was throughout a want of light and shade, and only in the last movement was that spirit manifested for which our English orchestras are justly famous. The grand piece from *Loreley*—in which the magnificent voice of Madame Clara Novello more than atoned for a certain lack of sensibility in her delivery of Leonora's passionate

music—fared better than the symphony, and was the most entirely successful performance of the evening. The chorus sang well, and the band was more on the alert, so that there were not many discrepancies to complain of. The overture of *Egmont* was capitally played, but to empty benches. The only attempt at an encore was in favour of Mr. Hullah's "Three fishers went sailing," a new song which Miss Dolby is doing her best to render popular. The two very graceful romances from Meyerbeer's *L'Etoile du Nord* were both admirably given, that of Peter by Herr Formes, that of Danilowitz by Signor Gardoni. These and Mr. Howard Glover's setting of Shelley's Indian Serenade, which Mr. Sims Reeves sang with expression, were welcome, not only on account of their own merits, but because they were unhackneyed. Mr. Hatton's cantata—in which the music of Robin Hood was even more effectively sung by Mr. Reeves than at the Bradford Festival, where it gained so much praise, the other parts being very efficiently supported by Mrs. Weiss (Maid Marian), Mr. Weiss (the Sheriff), and Mr. Smith (Little John)—was also welcome, and for a similar reason. Miss Louisa Vinning produced a favourable impression in the air from *Il Trovatore*, which has not been heard so often, and from such a variety of throats at Worcester as in London, and was therefore generally acceptable. The violin solo of M. Sainton (his own arrangement of the *Trovatore* melodies) was a finished and masterly performance.

The early morning service in the cathedral, on Wednesday, was well attended, and the congregation (admitted gratis) added the sum of £2 17s. 10d. to the collections for the charity. The musical part of the service (Mr. Townsend Smith, of Hereford, at the organ) comprised Humphrey's chant for "Venite," Dr. Crotch's 99th double-chant for the psalms, Orlando Gibbons's "Te Deum" and "Jubilate," and the anthem "Hear my prayer," of Norris.

The performance of *Elijah* was in many respects as effective as any we have heard at the meetings of the choirs. There were some drawbacks, it is true, but the only important failure was in the double quartet, "For he shall give his angels charge," which is always difficult, but has never fared worse than on this occasion. The unaccompanied trio, "Lift thine eyes from the mountains" (sung by Madame Novello, Mrs. Weiss, and Miss Dolby), was repeated in obedience to a signal from the Bishop, and the chorus, "He watching over Israel," which follows, and of which it forms a part, was spoiled in consequence, as usual. The other singers in *Elijah* were Mr. Sims Reeves, Sig. Gardoni, and Herr Formes, the subordinate duties being assigned to Misses Palmer and Gilbert, Messrs. Montem Smith and Thomas. The tenor music of the first part was intrusted to Sig. Gardoni, who gave the recitative and air, "If with all your hearts," with graceful and perfect expression. In the second part, Mr. Sims Reeves confirmed his right to be considered our best singer of sacred music, both in execution and in style, and sang, "Then shall the righteous shine forth," to perfection. The pathetic appeal of the prophet, "It is enough," most impressively delivered by Herr Formes; Madame Novello's "Holy, holy," equalling that of Jenny Lind herself in power of voice; and Miss Dolby's "O rest in the Lord," were the other solo displays which elicited the greatest admiration. The choruses were nearly all satisfactory, in several instances faultless, and invariably marked by that peculiarly solemn tone which can only be heard and felt within the sacred walls of a cathedral.

There was something about 1,100 present. The collection for the charity amounted to £221 5s. 8d., not so good as yesterday, and by no means so good as it might have been.

The second evening concert (on Wednesday) was much better attended than the first. The performances commenced with a selection from *Der Freischütz*, of which the overture and opening chorus were the first pieces. These we have known produce more effect because better executed; but Mr. Sims Reeves made ample amends by his very fine singing in "Through the forests," while Herr Formes in the Bacchanalian song, which he gave with prodigious spirit, winning (and taking) an encore, kept up the good impression; and this was in no way diminished by Madame Novello, in the great scene of Agatha—*Anglice*, "Softly sighs the voice of evening." The other pieces were the

trio from the second act (by Mesdames Hepworth, Weiss, and Mr. Montem Smith); the beautiful romance of Agatha, violoncello accompaniment, extremely well sung by Madame Weiss; the Bridesmaids' Chorus, and the Huntsmen's Chorus, neither of which last could be complimented for precision and delicacy. The Duke of Cambridge entering the hall while Madame Weiss was singing, the performance of that lady was arrested and the national anthem substituted, the solos being delivered with marked energy by Madame Novello and Mr. Sims Reeves. All the audience rose to welcome his Royal Highness, and remained standing during the anthem, at the end of which Madame Weiss resumed the song she had temporarily abandoned, beginning again from the beginning, amid great applause.

Valentine's air from the fourth act of the *Huguenots*, sung by Miss Dolby in her best manner, suggested a comparison between the styles of Weber and Meyerbeer, from which both may be said to have come forth with honour. Auber's delicious barcarole, "Young Agnes," from *Fra Diavolo*, came next. It was sung by Sig. Gardoni with the utmost grace and feeling, and repeated at the desire, we believe, of the Duke of Cambridge. The first part ended with an extremely meritorious performance of Mendelssohn's first pianoforte concerto, by Mr. W. G. Cousins, who would have deserved still greater praise had he taken the last movement (the opening more especially) at the proper speed. The second part is subjoined:—

Symphony—(No. 8)	Beethoven.
Recitative and Air—"Oh, ruddier than the cherry,"	Handel.
Song—"The Arab Maid,"	John Barnett.
Duetto—"Amor! poscente nomen!"	Rossini.
Song—"The Village Blacksmith,"	Weiss.
Cavatina—"Ah, forse è lui,"	Verdi.
Quartetto—(Rigoletto)	Verdi.
Benediction of the Fionards	Meyerbeer.

The glowing love-song of Polyphemus was given with immense spirit by Mr. Thomas, our young and rising English bass; Mr. John Barnett's "Arab Maid," a new ballad and a very pretty one, was sung with feeling by Miss Palmer, whose method of producing the voice, however, belongs to a false school, and (as the voice itself is good) should be carefully considered; Mad. Novello and Mr. Sims Reeves took strange liberties with the once so popular duet from Rossini's *Armida*; Mr. Weiss gave his own "Village Blacksmith" in his own accustomed hearty manner; Miss Louisa Vinning was encoined in the last movement of the air from *La Traviata*, which she executed with a great deal of dash and brilliancy in spite of the carelessness and irregularity of the orchestral accompaniment; the quartet from the last act of *Rigoletto* (Mad. Novello, Miss Dolby, Sig. Gardoni, and Herr Formes) "went"—almost to pieces; and the great choral scene from the fourth act of the *Huguenots* by no means reached the Royal Italian Opera standard at the late Covent-garden Theatre. The Symphony of Beethoven—the one in F, was not so well played as the symphony of Mendelssohn on Tuesday, and that, it may be remembered, was by no means irreproachable. The violoncello accompaniment in the trio was assigned to one instrument instead of several. This was "according to Beethoven," and, the task devolving upon Mr. Lucas, the passages were executed with the accustomed accuracy of that experienced musician. The symphony in other respects was marked by a want of finish and a want of "point" that rendered its performance anything rather than satisfactory. It was listened to, nevertheless, with undeviating attention, the majority, without possibly knowing why, being evidently relieved by this long and continuous piece of the satiety inseparable from an uninterrupted succession of fragments.

The musical part of the early service on Thursday comprised "Venite," grand chant (Humphrey); psalms, double chant, No. 101 (Dr. Crotch); service, Croft in A; and anthem, "Cry aloud and shout" (Isaiah xii. 6) Croft. The choir was crowded to inconvenience; but it is to be feared the major part were tempted less by the devotional solemnity than by the knowledge that a certain illustrious personage would be present. The sum of £5 4s. 2d. was collected for the charity.

The performances in the cathedral consisted of Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise*, some pieces from Mr. Costa's *Eli*, and various

songs, duets, and choruses from Handel's *Israel in Egypt*. The noble work of Mendelssohn had never before been given at Worcester, and was therefore a great attraction. The execution on the whole was very good, and the effect of the three orchestral movements far beyond what we could have imagined it would be in the nave of a cathedral. Every detail, even to the nicest combination, was clearly and distinctly heard. The choruses were not altogether so satisfactory, but the sublime grandeur of that which foreshadows the redemption of mankind. "The night is departing, the day is approaching," was earnestly felt by all who listened to its bursts of massive harmony reverberating through the aisles, and its solemn meaning penetrating to every heart. The corale, "Let all men praise the Lord," first in harmony and then thundered forth by all the voices in unison, to an ingeniously elaborate orchestral accompaniment, produced an equal impression. The solo pieces left nothing to criticise. Mr. Sims Reeves was never more impressive in his delivery of that great and intensely moving scene, "The sorrows of death," nor has the duet, "I waited for the Lord," so melodiously consoling, been more chastely sung than by Mad. Novello and Mrs. Weiss. To be brief *The Hymn of Praise* was completely successful; its many beauties were fully understood and appreciated. The selection from *Eli* afforded evident gratification. This comprised the war-song of Saph, splendidly declaimed by Mr. Sims Reeves; the morning and evening prayers, exquisitely sung by Miss Dolby; the trio for Samuel, Hannah, and Elkanah, given better than, perhaps, on any previous occasion, by Mad. Novello, Miss Dolby, and Mr. Montem Smith; the duet for basses (Mr. Weiss and Herr Formes), the florid air of Hannah, "I will extol thee, O Lord," by Madame Novello; the bass air, "Go in peace," by Herr Formes, all well sung; the unaccompanied quartet, and the chorus, "Hold not thy peace," in which the march is introduced. Of *Israel in Egypt*, or rather of the selections from that great masterpiece, which terminated the morning proceedings, there is only time to say that the chorus, "He gave them hailstones," was repeated at a signal from the Bishop; that the duet for basses, "The Lord is a man of war" (Herr Formes and Mr. Weiss), produced its accustomed effect; and that in "The enemy said I will pursue," Mr. Sims Reeves renewed his Crystal Palace triumph.

The numbers present were 1,200. The amount collected was £245 2s. 8d.

"NO LADY NEED APPLY."

To the Editor of the Musical World.

SIR,—How is it that in advertisements for parish organists, the above announcement is usually appended? Some of the most highly gifted and accomplished organ-players at this moment are of the female sex, and surely such words as the above are very complimentary to them, who are an honour to their profession! I need not do more than mention the names of Mrs. Bartholemew, Miss Mounsey, Miss Stirling, and Miss Cooper, in evidence that females are as capable of performing upon the largest organs, and conducting choirs, as members of the "stronger sex." Considering how few professions and employments are open to women of talent and capacity, why should they be generally excluded from one which is thoroughly feminine and respectable? It is true that the failing of the sex is vanity, and vanity often leads young ladies who are merely mechanical pianoforte players to fancy they can conduct services on the organ, and, with this idea, to compete for public appointments; but why exclude, even for this reason, those of the sex who are really musically educated from situations for which, on the whole, they are as fit as males? It is certainly an unfair and un-English procedure for parish officers to insert such a sentence in their advertisements as the one at the head of this letter. Why should a really competent female be set aside (as is too often the case, to my own knowledge) for the sake of a less competent male, simply because she is a female?

Faithfully, yours,

A CLERGYMAN.

August 20th, 1857.

THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.—This evening will be performed the Comedy, **VICTIMS**; after which, **BLACK-EYED SUSAN**; to conclude with **A DAUGHTER TO MARRY**. Commence at 7.

THEATRE ROYAL, ADELPHI.—This evening, will be performed, **GREEN BUSHES**; the Farce of **MY PRECIOUS BETSY**; to conclude with the Farce, **SLASHER AND CRASHER**. Commence at 7.

ROYAL OLYMPIC THEATRE.—This evening, the performance will commence with **THE LIGHTHOUSE**; to be followed by **A SUBTERFUGE**. To conclude with **MASANIELLO**. Commence at half-past 7.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A CONSTANT READER is informed that the journal in question is published by J. S. Dwight, School Street, Boston, U. S.

DEATH.

On the 25th instant, at his residence, 12 Onslow-square, Thomas Beale, Esq.

THE MUSICAL WORLD.

LONDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 29TH, 1857.

THE festival held at Worcester during the week—the 134th “meeting of the choirs”—to judge from all the accounts we have received, has been much the same kind of affair as the Gloucester Festival last year, the Hereford Festival the year previous, the Worcester Festival the year before that, and so back for half-a-century. The progress of musical taste, it would seem, cannot be affected by these celebrations, which are chiefly entitled to support inasmuch as they contribute something towards the cause of charity. The more is the pity—not only on account of music, but on account of the festivals themselves, which would have a still better chance of thriving, could they be associated with the true interests of art.

Why should this not be the case? Why, year after year, should the same tale of inefficiency be recorded? Every one knows why. Every one is aware that, while the festivals are managed as they *have been* managed, any hope of reform is out of the question. We need not enter further into particulars. Those who understand us will go with us; and those who do not can scarcely possess sufficient interest in the matter to make it worth the trouble of explanation.

About the gratification derived by individuals from the annual meetings of the choirs there is nothing to say. *Que chacun s’amuse*. The members may assemble, shake hands, sing together, and yet do no harm. But with reference to the absolute utility of these festivals, as hitherto constituted, it may be allowable for indifferent lookers-on to say a word. The plea is (of course) charity—a fund for widows and orphans of ministers who may die without leaving their surviving relatives the means of existence. Such a charity is a good charity; but there is no reason why it should be made a peg upon which to hang “festivals.” The relief of the widows and orphans is *primâ facie* a business of the Church, which winks at the existence of half-starving ministers. If the public is appealed to, no matter in what form or under what pretext, the public ought to be protected. We maintain that in this instance the public *is* appealed to, and under

the pretext of hearing first-rate musical entertainments, in consideration of very heavy charges of admission. Now the very heavy charges are liquidated, but the first-rate musical entertainment is not forthcoming. The public is therefore deceived.

Let the promoters of these music-meetings honestly avow that, virtually, they have nothing whatever to do with an institution which could exist and flourish (in its poor way) just as well without them; and in lieu of sheltering themselves under the delusion that charity can cover a multitude of sins, let them strive to make their performances, *bonâ fide*, as attractive as possible. The “widows and orphans” are not necessarily discarded by such a policy; but the connection between the two concerns would become much more respectable.

WHEN Mr. Charles Kean, yesterday week, delivered his farewell address for the season, there was one sentence that caused among the audience a sudden blank, contrasting strangely with the loud applause that had accompanied the rest of the speech. This was the covert declaration that his management was approaching its close.

After the year 1859, there will be no Princess’s Theatre in the sense in which we now understand the expression. There will, indeed, Providence permitting, be an elegant theatre in Oxford-street—one of the trunk thoroughfares of London—and the manager thereof, probably Mr. Maddox himself, will carry on a roaring trade; for to fail in such a situation would argue an amount of stupidity far exceeding the average that the veriest cynic would award to fallen man. Stupidity is certainly *not* the characteristic of Mr. Maddox. For a tolerably long series of years he managed the Princess’s Theatre with exceeding credit, and likewise with exceeding profit, carrying his bills through as many categories as were enumerated by Polonius, when he stated the *répertoire* of the Danish players. Mr. Maddox will thrive and rejoice, and we, if we are alive—(Maddox is sure to be alive)—will rejoice too, possibly without thriving; for we greatly respect Mr. Maddox.

But the Princess’s Theatre, such as we have it now—the Princess’s of Mr. Charles Kean—will have ceased to exist, and everybody will miss it. At present it is the “crack” legitimate theatre, and we do not see how its place is to be supplied. Dotted over the suburban regions of London there are several legitimate establishments. Mr. Phelps has manfully persisted in making Pentonville poetical—he is revered by Islington as a reformer of taste and morals—and the next new church at Highbury is to be dedicated to St. Samuel—Samuel being Mr. Phelps’s christian name. In Shoreditch, the standard of legitimacy is occasionally reared by the gallant Douglass—a large-minded man, who vends the genuine Hippocrene, at three pence a draught, to his humbler patrons. Mr. Douglass is, however, not merely “legitimate.” When the townsmen of St. Leonard’s, and the countrymen, who take advantage of the Eastern Counties Railway, have been thrilled by the classic tragedy of Miss Glyn, they are soothed with the dulcet strains of Mr. and Mrs. Sims Reeves before they are allowed to be shaken by the vigorous passions of an Anderson, or to be melted by the sorrows and the charms of an Elsworthy. Mr. Nelson Lee, too, strays now and then into Shakspearean paths, and invites the “Vandenhoofs” to Norton Folgate; and Mr. Creswick, of the Surrey, when he has gone through a course of melodrama, becomes his own bright particular star, and delights the southrons with his Othello.

But while these estimable gentlemen so creditably prepare "Shakspere" for the multitude, we cannot say that the aristocracy—commonly so called—have greatly benefited by their exertions. Often have we visited all the establishments just enumerated, but we do not remember that on any one occasion the approach of our Hansom was impeded by a line of private carriages.

Now Mr. Charles Kean, in an age un-Shaksperean as far as the higher class of play-goers is concerned, has provided a Shaksperean theatre for the aristocracy. He plays Shakspere almost exclusively—yet, in this "fast" period, his establishment is, *par excellence*, the fashionable English theatre.

A *fico* for the objection that Mr. Charles Kean gives show and spectacle in lieu of pure, unadulterated Shakspere. The very party who have been foremost with the cry against his revivals, is composed of the relics or intellectual descendants of the very persons who, when Mr. Macready adopted precisely the same theory of attraction at Covent Garden and at Drury Lane, were loud in their acclamations at the restoration of Shakspere to his deserved honours. Twenty years ago, poor Alfred Bunn was the mark for all the wits and censors of the day. What a wicked man was Alfred Bunn for dressing up his *Jewess* and his *Daughter of the Danube* with meretricious gawds, and how good was Mr. Macready for attiring the Swan of Avon with suitable ornaments! Such was the cry of 1837, and thereabouts. Now that Mr. Kean honours Shakspere in the same manner—save that his characters are more elaborate and his archæology is more precise—the old "legitimates" of 1837 accuse him of endeavouring to crush poetry beneath the weight of scenic embellishment. Granted that the "choleric word" of the captain is the "flat blasphemy" of the corporal, surely there is no reason that the absolute virtue of Mr. Macready should be the absolute vice of Mr. Charles Kean.

According to the old Roman legend, Tarpeia, when she betrayed the citadel, desired as her reward that which the soldiers carried on their left arms, thereby meaning their bracelets. The soldiers promised to grant her request, and fulfilled the promise by crushing her with their shields. In the eyes of the old legitimists, the decorations given by Mr. Macready to Shakspere are the bracelets—the ornaments bestowed by Mr. Kean are the shields. And why?

The fact is, Mr. Charles Kean has done the best that could be done for the drama at the present age. The fashionable public would not go to see an undecorated Shakspere at all, and Mr. Charles Kean, as the man born for the crisis, has turned decoration itself into a high art. You may as well compare a common carver and gilder with a first-rate sculptor as compare the producer of an ordinary spectacle with the manager who could conceive such a *Richard II.* as was exhibited on the boards of the Princess's.

For several years past the "next revival" of the Princess's has universally been anticipated as the great event of each coming season, next in importance to the opening of the opera-houses. When the world feels it can anticipate no longer, it will be a sensation the poorer, and, in this *blasé* age, that will be a serious deficiency. Even those who now ridicule the efforts of Mr. Charles Kean will find a difficulty in doing without him.

VERDI's new opera *Arolo* has been produced with immense success at Rimini, the composer having been recalled thirty times at the end of the performance.

ROYAL SURREY GARDENS COMPANY.

FIRST MEETING OF THE SHAREHOLDERS.

ON Friday evening, August 21st, a meeting of the shareholders in this undertaking was held at the Duke of Clarence Tavern, Penton-street, Walworth, for the purpose of taking into consideration the unfortunate position in which this company is at present placed. The chair was taken by Mr. Coombe.

The business of the meeting was commenced by Mr. FLEMING, who said that he believed there were few who did not feel astonished when the announcement was made that the company was bankrupt. He did not mean to cast any reflection upon individuals, but he did mean to say that their affairs had been greatly mismanaged (Hear, hear). It appeared that the whole capital of the company had been quite lost, and the petition for the winding-up of the company was from the architect of the music-hall. By reference to the deed of settlement, they would find that £14,000 had been stated to be paid to Mr. Tyler, as the purchase money of the gardens. There were then fourteen years of the lease unexpired, the rental being £346 a-year. The lease was under the dean and chapter of Canterbury, and in addition to the rent, the property was subject to a septennial fine of a year and a half of the annual estimated value. The question would arise, who received that £14,000—into whose hands it went in the first instance, and how it was disposed of? Mr. Tyler appeared to be the party, but it would be found he did not receive it. He would not mention names, but no Court would say that any directors had a right to expend £14,000 in the purchase of property which was not worth one farthing. The sum of £18,000 was put down as expended in the building. There was an item of £3,175 for preliminary expenses, but no statement was given what these expenses were for, and he was of opinion that that matter would not bear examination. The petition to have the company wound-up was from the architect of the building, who, he was sorry to hear, had not received one farthing for his professional services, for he had designed a beautiful building. Their loss in all had been £58,560, and they had £11,000 odd to pay, making a total of nearly £70,000 (Hear). Why the British Bank seemed to be a fool to this (A laugh). The directors would be put into a witness-box and would be examined as to the knowledge of these matters. It might be said that the shareholders should have looked into these accounts; but the accounts they could not get. Six months ago they had been told that there were no liabilities but the current expense of the gardens; and not only was a vote of thanks moved at that meeting to the directors, but a vote of indemnity also. He might also state that in consequence of advertisements put into the newspapers, declaring that the company was flourishing and paying 10 per cent., a large number of persons came forward and took shares, and from that source there had been received £1,200. There were a great number of tradesmen and others who would lose their accounts, and he wished it to go forth that they, the shareholders, had no knowledge of such things, as they could not obtain the accounts (Hear, hear). He had a resolution to propose to the meeting, but, before doing so, a document would be read by the chairman.

Mr. NICHOL said he made an application to see the books, as he was dissatisfied with the statement which had been made to the shareholders. He was refused, however, any access to them.

Mr. CHAPPELL said that M. Jullien had paid £400 on account of his shares, and had received nothing whatever on account of his salary; and, in addition to that loss, he had made himself liable to several tradesmen, which liability he was afraid would fall on him (Shame, shame).

The CHAIRMAN then read the petition, which, with the consent of the meeting, would be presented on Saturday to the Court of Bankruptcy.

[A copy of this statement will be found in our report of the proceedings in the Court of Bankruptcy.]

M. JULLIEN, in a very excited manner, addressed the meeting at some length, and in the course of his remarks said that Mr. Beale, at the first meeting of the committee of directors retired in disgust, as he would have nothing more to do with the concern. Mr. Chappell had lately done the same. Those of the

committee who remained—viz., Mr. Coppock, Mr. Holmes, and Mr. Barnes—he saw it was their intention to break up the affair as soon as possible; they wanted to be rid of it. It seemed to him that their object was to sell these gardens for £14,000, which were offered to him (M. Jullien) for £12,000, and then for £10,000. The building upon the grounds had been put on at the expense of the shareholders; it was then mortgaged, and was now to be sold for nothing. He had been at every meeting of the committee, and such was the difficulty of transacting any business, that if he wanted to put a nail up in the gardens, they said, "Wait till the committee meets, and you will get authority to do it." They were often very much divided, and there was no executive power among them to execute what was decided. The committee did in these gardens what was done in the beginning at Sebastopol—there were too many generals. What he wanted was some executive power—even in the American Republic they have a President to sign what is wanted. "Mr. Coppock had," said M. Jullien, "so much power in the committee, that the others were sitting round him like mouses (A laugh) and trembling; they never decided anything; and he says, 'I vote for that,' 'I vote for that,' and it is done. Some day I give some objections, but no use, and then I say, 'You don't understand public amusements—I could better trust you to make members of Parliament than for amusements.' There was the same system of opposition to everything I proposed. I show you how I made the orchestra pay. Mr. Lumley pays £350 for my orchestra, but I never paid before more than £250 or £270 in the season. Mr. Gye was spending £400 and £500 for an orchestra, and was making money fast when I was with him. The conclusion, I have to say, is that Mr. Beale retired, as he saw it was impossible to go on. Mr. Chappell had some more patience, and I should have retired too if I had not given £2,000 by my salary, and £400 by a cheque on the Bank of England. Since these gardens were open I never received anything for my salary, although my nominal salary was very great. But I was working very hard. The only part they accept of my proposition was the musical festival. I came back to my home satisfied that day, and say, 'They begin to take my advice.' I said the expenses will not be more than £1,200, and they will take £3,000 or £4,000. I engaged all the artists and everybody for this festival, and I asked the committee to vote me £1,200, and I never passed that sum. The receipts came to a little more than I said—£3,400 (Cheers), and left a clear profit to the company of £1,000. The receipts were taken away every night, and the artists who made the money came were not paid (A laugh). All the money disappeared somehow. I lose £2,000 by my shares, and £2,000 for my salary, a great deal of which I paid for repairs and fittings, and money which I advanced to the artists, and I took a house in the neighbourhood, that I might be near. All these things cost me a loss of £6,000 altogether and twelve months hard work, for I never work so hard in my life. If the place is not shut, it is because Mr. Beale and Mr. Chappell have come forward to help me. This year the directors have only paid me a £500 bill, which was dishonoured, and a cheque for £250, which was dishonoured too (Shame). I put up all the counters for the supply of iced champagne, and the second row of chandeliers, as the musicians could not see to read their parts, and when I told the directors they had no light, they said, 'If you want more light put it up yourself' (A laugh). As to the gardens, if 10,000 people were to go in every night, they would not pay under such management. I have seen 2,000 people myself go in without paying, and there was no check upon the money received (Cries of "shame, shame").

Mr. VINING doubted that the proposed petition would be received. It would seem from the state of the company that the affairs must be wound up, and delay would not be advisable. The mortgage, the purchase, and other matters could not be inquired into by a more competent court than the Court of Bankruptcy. A clause in the late Act would apply to the directors. He would advise that they should immediately ascertain the rights of the parties, and things might be set right.

Mr. OLIVER asked whether the meeting on the 25th would take place, as it was reported it would not be held?

The CHAIRMAN said it was in the power of the shareholders to hold the meeting if they decided to do so.

Mr. FLEMING said that, much as he had been surprised before, he had been still more surprised at what he had heard at the meeting from M. Jullien. That gentleman had been the mainstay of the concern, and he had been most shamefully treated (Hear, hear.)

The CHAIRMAN said they should sift it to the bottom (hear).

Mr. NELSON LEE agreed with M. Jullien, that if the gardens had been full every evening they could not have paid in consequence of the shameful management. He had been for many years a caterer for public amusement, and he felt sure that if properly managed there was no better property in London than the Surrey Gardens (Hear).

M. JULLIEN—A mine of wealth.

After some discussion the following resolution was agreed to:—"That the petition read by the chairman be approved of and signed by the shareholders, and be presented to the Court of Bankruptcy to-morrow (Saturday); and it is further resolved that Mr. Fleming be requested to present the petition."

The meeting terminated with a vote of thanks to the chairman.

PETITION TO THE BANKRUPTCY COURT, AUGUST 22.
(Before Mr. Commissioner FANE).

THIS was a meeting to obtain an adjudication on the petition of Mr. Horace Jones, architect, a shareholder, praying that an order absolute may be made for winding up the above company.

Mr. Roxburgh appeared for Mr. Horace Jones (instructed by Mr. A. Jones, solicitor); Mr. Bagley, Mr. Linklater, Mr. Chidley, Mr. George, Mr. F. W. Chappell, Mr. Fleming, and Mr. Coombe also appeared in the case.

An original printed prospectus, headed "Private and Confidential," sets forth that the company (limited) will be formed with a capital of £40,000, in 4,000 shares of £10 each, and that the committee of management, until the choice of directors, are: Wm. Beale, Esq., 201, Regent-street; S. Arthur Chappell, Esq., 214, Regent-street; T. K. Holmes, Esq., 18, Fludyer-street; George Bain, Esq., 18, Parliament-street; James Coppock, Esq., 3, Cleveland-row, St. James's; and James Wyld, Esq., Charing-cross. M. Jullien is named as the director of music and conductor; Horace Jones, Esq., of 16, Furnival's-inn, as the architect; and William Ellis, Esq., of 25, Golden-square, as the secretary, *pro tem.* of the company.

The prospectus proceeds to set forth among other advantages offered by the company the following:—"The gardens in the hands of a single proprietor have for more than 25 years been patronised by royalty, &c., but it is clear, from the great success of last season, that much larger results may be achieved, and that the public require accommodation beyond that which any single proprietor would venture to give. The application of capital, with a liberal but judicious outlay, is imperatively called for; and now, by the Limited Liability Act, no danger can accrue to the parties supplying it. Arrangements have been entered into with the present proprietor. Not a moment will thus be lost in making preparations for the next season and insuring the large return that must inevitably follow. All preliminary expenses and the outlay which a new concern would demand will thus be avoided, and if the business of the gardens be carried on with only the usual preparation more than a 5 per cent. dividend on the capital employed may with certainty be calculated upon. It is proposed to erect buildings of a character and magnitude to command the attention of the public, comprising a music-hall capable of accommodating 10,000 people. To this will be added saloons for refreshments, conservatories, aviaries for the display of beautiful and rare birds, and aquaria for marine plants and fishes, while exhibitions of various kinds will be introduced, affording amusement to promenaders. As a guarantee that the music will be of the highest order, the eminent services of M. Jullien have been secured, on advantageous terms, for a period of five years. The orchestra will be on a grand scale, and vocal talent of the very highest order will be engaged. The artistic departments of paintings and fireworks will be confided to the most celebrated men, and refreshments of a quality hitherto

unequalled will be supplied at moderate prices." A beautiful lithographed sketch of the gardens (appended) is next referred to. Not more than 10 per cent. dividend will be "allowed" to be paid in any one year, and "the surplus will be set aside for a reserved fund from which the entire capital of the shareholders may and will be repaid." Shareholders may, in lieu of receiving a share in the annual profits, have a personal ticket of admission for five years, with full reservation of right to share in the "surplus" to be then divided. The prospectus goes on to state that "no commercial enterprise of the day affords such certainty of success with so large a profit. The promoters have carefully avoided all exaggerated views; application for shares may be made to the Secretary, at 25, Golden-square, or to the committee of management at their residences. A large portion of the capital is already subscribed. Early application for shares is necessary, and immediately upon the allotment a general meeting of the shareholders will be called to appoint the directors, solicitors, and other officers of the company, thus avoiding favouritism, and insuring a direction possessing the confidence of the shareholders."

Mr. ROXBURGH, on applying on behalf of Mr. Jones, the architect of the company, for an order for winding up, said that the prospectus of the company was put forth in March, 1856. Out of the required number (4,000) 3,740 were applied for. Of these 3,256 shares were taken up, which gave the company a capital of £32,560 to commence business with. The whole of that capital was lost, and there were now debts to the amount of £26,000, of which £14,500 were secured by a mortgage of the Music-hall, etc., and the remainder, £11,500 was wholly unsecured. The petitioner (Mr. Jones) was the holder of 20 shares, upon which the £200 had been paid up. He was also a creditor for £1,100.

Mr. CHAPPELL, for certain shareholders, doubted whether an order for winding up would be valid on Mr. Jones's petition. Mr. Jones having paid up the full amount of his shares, he could not be said to be a contributory, and he petitioned for a winding-up order as a contributory. Mr. Chappell referred to the 65th clause of the Act.

The COMMISSIONER.—You say that call cannot be made upon him because he has paid everything?

Mr. CHAPPELL.—Yes.

Mr. ROXBURGH referred to the 67th clause of the Act, sections 4 and 5, in support of the petition.

The COMMISSIONER observed that it would be strange if an honest shareholder, who had paid up every farthing on his shares, should be precluded from petitioning as a contributory. He might by so doing be able to get something back.

Mr. CHAPPELL submitted that if the petition were allowed creditors would have no voice in the matter, as the shareholders could elect the official liquidator.

After some discussion the COMMISSIONER said he would cut the Gordian knot by admitting Mr. Jones to be a petitioner. He could not conceive that the Legislature had ever intended to preclude him from being a petitioner under the circumstances brought under his notice.

Mr. FLEMING said the present proceedings came on some of the shareholders like a thunderbolt, and that he had been requested to present a memorial to his Honour as agreed to yesterday at a public meeting of shareholders and creditors. Mr. Fleming handed up a memorial, of which the subjoined is a copy:—

"This memorial sheweth:—

"That Mr. W. Tyler was lessee of certain ground and premises at Walworth, and he there conducted, in a very respectable way, Zoological Gardens, but that for the last two or three years of his tenancy it turned out an unprofitable undertaking.

"That he became indebted to a considerable amount to James Coppock, one of the Directors of the Company called the Royal Surrey Gardens Company, who became mortgagee of the premises, or in some other way was beneficially entitled thereto.

"That for about 18 months previously to the year 1855 the lease and premises were in the market for sale, and several parties treated for the same, but no sale was effected.

"That in the latter part of the year 1855 a company was formed, called the Royal Surrey Gardens (Limited), of which the said James

Coppock was one of the registered promoters, the said Mr. Tyler was appointed manager, and the petitioner, Mr. Horace Jones (who now seeks to wind up the Company) was the architect.

"That a Company was readily formed, and in the month of March commenced their buildings and laying out the grounds at an outlay of about £25,000.

"That at a meeting of shareholders in October, 1856, a dividend of 10 per cent. was declared out of the profits said to be made in a period of 10 weeks, during which time the gardens had been open, and the account marked A* hereunto annexed was then circulated among the shareholders.

"That in April last a second meeting was called upon the following notice, without any account being sent with it.

"Notice is hereby given, in pursuance of the deed of settlement of this Company, that the second ordinary general meeting of shareholders will be held on Thursday, the 2nd day of August proximo, at the Royal Surrey Gardens, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon precisely."

"That from the wording of the above notice, and intimation given to the shareholders that nothing but the ordinary business, such as the arrangement of the entertainments and the opening of the gardens, would be under consideration, several shareholders did not attend who otherwise would have done so, particularly if it had been known that an account affecting the validity of the undertaking would have been brought forward.

"That at this meeting the shareholders were kept in the large concert-room until the appointed time for meeting had expired, and they were then shown into an adjoining room, where a plentiful supply of sandwiches and wine was spread upon a counter, and at one end was laid a bundle of accounts, one of which marked B† is hereto exhibited, and which accounts were not distributed, but left to be taken by those who chanced to see them.

"The several shareholders had not time even to read the said account before some gentleman moved that such account be received, approved, and adopted; whereupon a question arose as to whether the dividend declared at the last meeting was or was not paid out of the capital, when a show of hands was taken and the account was assumed to be passed by a majority of two, as counted by the secretary, all the directors present voting for the passing of their own accounts, and the real and vital question as to the sum of £14,000, as charged for the purchase of the gardens, was not made the subject of discussion.

"That some of the shareholders immediately after the said meeting began to investigate the account generally, and upon inquiry they found that the £14,000 charged, as and for the value of the lease, was for premises which had only an unexpired term of about twelve years to run, and was at a rent of £346 a-year, besides rates and taxes, and subject to a septennial fine of a year and a-half value, and the letter from a shareholder marked C† hereto exhibited was circulated to every director and shareholder.

* The schedule A, referred to in the preceding document, purports to be an account of receipts and payments for the season commencing July 15, and ending October 1, 1856. The account states that the cash paid for music, vocalists, salaries, and all charges for current expenses connected with the gardens is £10,468 5s. 3d., which, with £968 7s. 9d. owing on current expense account, leaves a balance profit on the season of £1,916 1s. 11d., the cash received for admission to the various performances having been £12,639 18s. 5d., and the cash received from cigar, champagne, and refreshment rooms, £712 15s. 8d.; total, £13,352 14s. 1d.

† The schedule B referred to purports to be a general balance sheet to December 31, 1856. It shows capital paid up £30,493; amount received for admission to gardens, etc., £13,615 4s. 1d.; amount received for surplus stores, £519 7s. 9d.; from creditors on loan, £5,080 12s. 3d. Total, £49,708 4s. 1d. Against this amount there were:—By property—amount paid for gardens, £14,000; on construction account, £19,678 16s. 9d.; preliminary expenses, £3,175 17s.; current expenses, £11,693 1s. (including M. Jullien's salary, £1,250; vocalists, £1,040; band, £2,447; fireworks, £1,344), leaving cash £1,160 8s. 7d. in hands of bankers. Total, £49,708 4s. 1d. To this account is affixed the certificate of J. Weston, auditor, that he "has examined the same, finds it correct, and hereby confirms the same."

‡ Subjoined is a copy of letter C referred to:—

"33, Essex-street, Strand, W.C., April 27.

"To the Shareholders of the Royal Surrey Gardens Company.

"Notice of Meeting of Shareholders.

"SIR,—Several shareholders who attended the meeting of this company on the 2nd inst. are greatly dissatisfied, not only with the

"That in pursuance of this circular a meeting took place, and the question was fully brought forward, but owing to a statement made by Mr. Coppock, the acting director of the company, the subject was not entertained. The fact, however, that the lease had only about eleven years to run was not denied, and the sum of £14,000, as the value of the lease, was justified under a statement made by Mr. Coppock, that several offers had been made for the purchase of the lease previously to the formation of the company, but which statements have since turned out to be fallacious.

"That in the prospectus issued upon the formation of the company there appears the following paragraph:—'All preliminary expenses, and the outlay which a new concern would demand will thus be avoided, and if the business of the gardens were carried on with only the usual preparation, more than a 5 per cent. dividend on the capital employed might certainly be calculated upon; and yet in the account marked B £3,175 17s. is charged for Parliamentary expenses, besides £1,359 19s. for 'stock, fixtures, &c.,' and in the £3,175 17s. is included a sum of £600 towards a musical festival, £300 for salary to Mr. Tyler, the manager, and other sums of a like nature, although in the first account marked A, salaries and all charges are stated to be debited against the company.

"That although it is possible that some of the directors might have been in ignorance of the short time the lease had to run, and that all erections upon the ground would pass to the landlord at the expiration of it; still, after they had received the direct communication of the fact by the before-mentioned letter of the 22nd of April, they still went on to expend a large sum of money, amounting to nearly £4000, in additional buildings, and the petitioner, Mr. Horace Jones, was the architect employed in such erections, he at the same time knowing the above facts.

"That in order to pay for such additional buildings and other outgoings, the directors issued the following advertisement, and which appeared in *The Times* from about the 24th of April to the 10th of May last:—'Royal Surrey Gardens (Limited).—The directors of the company having paid a dividend at the rate of £10 per cent. per annum from the actual earnings of the first short season of ten weeks, are ready to issue shares of £10 each at par, if applied for by the 11th of May proximo, on which day the Gardens will be opened to the public for the season ending the 30th day of September next.'

"That under the above advertisement a great many applications

account itself, but with the way in which it was attempted to be passed.

"The shareholders generally are under the impression that the company have a term of about 50 years in the above gardens, but the following facts may be relied on:—

"A lease was granted to Mr. Tyler, the late tenant, for a term of 21 years, from September, 1847, at a rent of £346 per annum, which expires in less than 11½ years, when all the property passes to the landlord. This lease has been assigned to the company, and is the only title upon which upwards of £25,000 has been, and is being, expended on building alone. But this is not all; the company have to pay a fine every seven years to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, amounting to one year and a half improved value. The last fine was paid two years since by Mr. Tyler, and amounted to £500, when the premises were comparatively valueless, and in five years more an increased fine must be paid, which, under a similar assessment, will amount to £2,000, and yet for this short term of 11½ years, with an enormous fine to pay, £14,000 is charged to the company for the interest in the lease, £3,175 17s. for preliminary expenses, although the prospectus issued upon the formation of the company expressly states that all preliminary expenses are avoided! I deem it fair to state that no portion of the £14,000, or £3,175 17s., has, I believe, gone into the pocket of the directors generally; but surely it is a question of great importance to know who has received this £14,000, and for what it has been paid, if the lease expires in 11½ years.

"Every disinterested shareholder must therefore be anxious to know the truth of the foregoing assertions, and for this purpose the directors have notice, and the solicitor to the landlord has been solicited to attend a meeting to be holden at the Manor House Tavern, close to the Surrey Gardens, on Thursday next, the 30th inst., at 3 o'clock precisely, at which time and place you are solicited to attend, in order that the above statement may be fully investigated, and, if necessary, a committee of shareholders appointed to inquire into and protect their own interests.

"I am, Sir, (in behalf of myself and others),

"Your obedient servant,

"W. A. COMBE,
"A holder of 20 shares."

were made, and between £1,000 and £2,000 received, thus increasing the capital account against the original shareholders.

"That at the meeting of shareholders held in April last, questions were asked respecting the sum of £5,080 12s. 6d. debited as creditors on loan in the account marked B, when Mr. Coppock, the acting director, distinctly assured the shareholders that such loan was on debentures, and the full extent of moneys owing by the company, and that the company then was in a very flourishing condition, and was not subject to any other liabilities except the current expenses.

"That it now appears by the petition and affidavit of Mr. Horace Jones that mortgages to the extent of £14,500 have been executed by the directors, and that there are other debts to the extent of £11,500 unsecured and unprovided for.

"That it has been ascertained from application at the office that the sum of £14,500 so secured on mortgage were by deeds executed in December and January last, and therefore well known to the directors, and particularly to Mr. Coppock, at the time of the meeting in April last, and that the putting forth the sum of £5,080 12s. 6d. as the only amount due, when mortgages to the extent of £14,500 had been executed three months previously, was not only intended to deceive the shareholders, but was an insult upon common sense, and fraudulent as against those parties who paid their money under the before-mentioned advertisement.

"That the time for calling the half-yearly meeting in the Royal Surrey Gardens Company was the 1st of July last, but such meeting has not been summoned till the 25th instant, being more than six weeks after the time at which it should have been called, and is now about to be postponed.

"That from the statement made in the petition and affidavit of the said Horace Jones, the affairs of the company appeared to have suddenly turned from prosperity to adversity; and instead of paying a dividend of 10 per cent., to be in an utterly hopeless condition, as the figures used by him clearly demonstrates:—

"Money raised upon 3,256 shares	£32,560
Ditto, upon mortgage	14,500
Debts owing, which the company are unable to pay ...	11,500
	£58,560

"That at a meeting of the shareholders held on the 21st instant, certain resolutions were passed with the sanction of your memorialists, approving among other things of the presentment of this memorial to this honourable court.

"W. A. COMBE, Chairman,
"And about 30 Shareholders.

"P.S.—That at a very numerous meeting of shareholders held on the 21st inst., certain resolutions were passed, and it was resolved that as all the shareholders are taken by surprise, that this memorial be signed by the shareholders present, and presented to the hon. Commissioner before whom the petition of Mr. Horace Jones has been referred, and that as it is expected that very important facts will transpire at the meeting of shareholders on the 25th instant, that the said Commissioner be solicited to postpone the hearing of the said petition till further investigation can be made, and such steps taken by the shareholders as may be advised."

The COMMISSIONER said he must decline to take judicial cognizance of the memorial.

A protracted discussion ensued whether the term "unavailable" could be said to apply to the company's assets. It was admitted that the debts were £26,000, and that the company had not a shilling of assets; but it was alleged that there might be something available from the surplus property as held by the mortgage creditors for £14,000.

The COMMISSIONER did not think this could be considered available assets. There were unsecured creditors to the amount of £11,500, and there was not a shilling to pay them with. It was urged that this was a strange state of things, the directors having in April last induced shareholders to believe that the concern was most prosperous, and declared a dividend of 10 per cent. per annum out of the profits. Mr. Coppock was represented to be the acting director at the time this dividend was declared, and was the only director whose conduct was specifically complained of or adverted to. Mr. Fleming said he had been refused by the secretary information that he sought, and certain shareholders did not believe that the amount owing to creditors had been correctly set forth. He asked for an adjournment to allow time for inquiry.

Mr. ROXBURGH urged that there were executions out against the company, and that everything could be seized and sold on Monday next if a winding-up order from this court was not obtained. The secretary was here to be examined if the objectors wished. He held writs in his hand under which executions of the amount of upwards of £1,000 could be put in on Monday next.

The COMMISSIONER said he was relieved in some degree from the consequences of adjourning the order, as he observed by a clause in the Act (the 80th), that executions would not avail creditors who so obtained payment in the event of a winding-up order being obtained within three months.

In reply to this it was urged that the clause did not apply to the Crown, and that an execution would be in the gardens on Monday for £80 for Queen's taxes.

The COMMISSIONER—You don't mean to say that the Queen will destroy all this valuable property to obtain payment of £80.

Mr. Jones.—The Queen destroys everything. She always does, sir. (Laughter.)

It was stated that the directors had an offer of £240 for the hire of the gardens for twelve days, and that if a winding-up order should not be obtained, the amount would be lost.

To meet this difficulty it was suggested that the directors and company might venture to incur the risk of receiving the money, and applying it to the payment of the Queen's taxes and other pressing necessities.

Mr. COOMBE urged that the parties whose views he represented complained that a great fraud had been committed on the shareholders, and that the petitioning shareholder was the individual who had very recently recommended an outlay of 4,000, on the refreshment rooms.

Mr. A. Jones.—No.

Mr. COOMBE.—A large body of shareholders consider that the conduct of the directors is most extraordinary.

The COMMISSIONER.—Notwithstanding which you appear to wish that they should remain in charge of the property. Would it not be better to allow it to be transferred to an official liquidator?

Mr. COOMBE urged that on Thursday next, at 2 o'clock, there would be a meeting of shareholders, as convened by the directors. Could not an adjournment be granted until after that meeting? There were shareholders and creditors who thought that Mr. Horace Jones had been put on by directors to take these proceedings.

Mr. ROXBURGH thought it very hard to have such an imputation made.

The COMMISSIONER.—Having regard to the entire circumstances, I will grant an adjournment to Thursday next, at half-past 2 o'clock. ("Hear, hear," and clapping of hands for M. Jullien, who stated during the proceedings that he was a creditor of the Company for £6,000, and similar manifestations of approval for various other parties.)

On the application of Mr. ROXBURGH,

The COMMISSIONER granted an order restraining proceedings under all actions until that day, and the Commissioner further remarked that if the directors did not find the means of obtaining the £240 to insure the letting of the gardens for the 12 days, they would fail to do so at the risk of being well abused.

An application on behalf of Mrs. Seacole to inspect the books of the company, and ascertain the amount due to her on an agreement that she should receive one-third of the proceeds of certain nights performance in her favour, must in the meantime stand over. Mrs. Seacole, it appeared, had been thus far deprived of any benefit from the performances.

It should be mentioned that during the proceedings Mr. Coombe stated that it was the opinion of a number of the shareholders that certain directors ought to be indicted—a remark which drew from Mr. Roxburgh a reply, that since the proceedings taken against the directors of the Royal British Bank this seemed to be a common notion among shareholders in public companies. Altogether the proceedings were of a most angry character, and gave promise of those at the meetings on Tuesday and Thursday next being still more so.

SECOND MEETING OF THE SHAREHOLDERS.

Tuesday, August 25th.

The meeting was numerously attended, but the directors abstained from being present.

Mr. COOMBE was called to the chair, and in opening the proceedings said that the state of their property showed it was in a ruinous condition, and therefore they must well deliberate on the matter, and not be too hasty in their conclusions. He felt that the petition to the Bankruptcy Court was the petition of the directors to wind up the affairs against the shareholders, and unless it was superseded the shareholders would be ruined. (Hear.)

Mr. FLEMING said he hoped that they would excuse him for detaining them, but he wished to give them some information relative to their position. (Hear, hear.) The petition was presented by Mr. A. Jones for his brother, Mr. Horace Jones, the architect to the company. He did not mean to say one word against those gentlemen individually, but in the position they held with regard to the company. The Commissioner in Bankruptcy appeared at first to think that this was one of those bubble companies that had got into bankruptcy, and therefore thought it would be advisable to wind it up, but when he was informed that the shareholders felt aggrieved he granted an adjournment till Thursday, with an order to look into the accounts, and he must observe that Mr. Ellis, the secretary, had rendered them every assistance. (Hear, hear.) Himself and Mr. Coombe had looked into the accounts on the previous day, and found they were so complicated that it was impossible to come to any conclusion in that time. They looked at the accounts from which the dividend was declared, and there it was that their attention had been drawn to the position of their creditors, and on looking at the Act it was discovered that the directors were liable for any debts if they improperly declared a dividend. Well, then, the accounts themselves showed that when the directors did declare a dividend of 5 per cent. for the half-year they were not in a solvent position. There were liabilities then outstanding to the extent of £9,000. There were two mortgages on the property—viz., one for £9,500, and a second to the builder for £5,500. Of those sums £2,300 was paid to Mr. Coppock for money he had advanced to the building account. The whole of the £5,500 was borrowed before the half-yearly meeting of the company in April last, and yet at that meeting he was told there were no outstanding liabilities except those for the current expenses, while the company was to all intents and purposes perfectly insolvent. Looking generally at their position, there was a clause in the Act which allowed them to wind up their own affairs; and he thought it would be much better for them to wind up their own affairs rather than suffer the expense and delay of going through the Court of Bankruptcy. He thought that the Commissioner would grant them this (Hear), and he did not think Mr. Horace Jones would, advised as he was by a respectable solicitor, stand out against this opinion, seeing that it was almost the unanimous wish of the shareholders. The effect of doing it themselves would be this—that they might come to terms with the mortgagees, and if it was thought desirable to carry the gardens on they might do so under a different management, reducing so much of the expenses as might be deemed advisable. Then he thought the company might be carried on successfully, and with remuneration to all concerned. (Hear, hear.) Referring to the lease, he expressed his conviction that the landlords were anxious to assist them in their present painful position, and in conclusion, Mr. Fleming said that he should advise them to go before the Commissioner and urge the necessity of allowing the shareholders to wind up the affairs of the company, which would save an immense amount of their property. (Hear.)

Mr. NICHOLL then followed in the same course, and, referring to the late affair with regard to the benefit of Mrs. Seacole, he said he thought their honour was at stake.

M. JULLIEN (with some animation)—That is a robbery. She ought to have had her money every night—that was agreed on. The man who took that money ought to be brought before you. It was paid away for bills which were written by the parties themselves. The Duke of Cambridge would not allow it, nor would the other distinguished officers connected with that lady's benefit. The woman had been robbed. The whole cry is

Mr. Coppock; where is Mr. Coppock? Why does he not come here? (Loud and vehement applause.)

Mr. NICHOLL said that with regard to that affair, some gentlemen had taken it up, and would represent the matter to Lord Palmerston to-morrow. After some further remarks, he moved a resolution to the effect that Mr. Horace Jones being still the architect, and Mr. A. Jones the solicitor to the company, they were unfit persons to conduct the winding up of the affairs, especially as the conduct of the directors might be called into question, and therefore pledging the meeting to support the appeal for allowing the shareholders to obtain a voluntary winding up of the company, which would save an immense sacrifice of the property of the shareholders.

Mr. SWAN seconded the motion, which, without any discussion, was carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN then suggested that Mr. Tyler should here give some explanation as to the 14,000 (£1) shares for the gardens, which were alleged to be worth nothing.

Mr. TYLER, in complying with this request, went at some length into the details of what he proposed when the gardens first changed hands, to make them attractive, and said he believed he had always done his duty to the satisfaction of all. Mr. Tyler was proceeding to read his details as to the management of the gardens, and also his suggestions for their being carried out, when

Mr. NICHOLL rose to order. The question was about the £14,000.

Mr. TYLER said that he felt something had been said against him, and therefore he had a right to proceed.

The CHAIRMAN acquiesced.

Mr. TYLER then went on to say that the sum he paid for the gardens, the 8½ years' lease, was £11,500. Something had been said about that; but they must bear in mind that they did not purchase bricks and mortar, but the character which the place had obtained. Coming to the £14,000, he said that was all paid in shares. At that time he owed Mr. Coppock some money, and he kept 11,000 of the shares and handed over 3,000 to himself (Mr. Tyler). He expected these were all paid up, but he found that 3,000 had not been paid up, and that he was liable for £3,000. In conclusion he would, in answer to a question, state that Mr. Coppock had a lien on the gardens before the company had taken them.

Mr. SWAN wished to know whether M. Jullien, as a director, had ever had the gardens offered to him, and at what price.

M. JULLIEN said that some 10 years ago he wished to build a room for himself, and the gardens were offered to him for £16,000, but to this he objected, as the lease was short, and he did not want the animals. It was afterwards offered by Mr. Tyler in writing for £12,000, but still he would not have taken the gardens at that price, nor attempt to build anything on it until the lease was renewed. (Cheers.)

Mr. TYLER having offered a few remarks in explanation,

The CHAIRMAN then called the attention of the meeting to their exact position. They were there under an 11 years' lease, at a rental of £346, and taxes about £250, and every seven years they had to pay a fine to the province of Canterbury of one-and-a-half years' value, which he estimated would be about £2,000. He thought now they had built such magnificent premises that they should not lose them readily. It was intended evidently to get the affair in such a state that it could be brought under the hammer, but that should not be allowed, for the petition of Mr. Jones was only his in name; therefore, he should ask for permission, as he knew the facts of the case, to give in an affidavit to the Court of Bankruptcy (Hear, hear) to let them have the power of winding up the concern. (Hear, hear.)

M. JULLIEN wished to make a few remarks. He wanted to know where Mr. Coppock was. Mr. Coppock could come and declare a dividend of 5 per cent., which was wrong, because we never had his dividend. But after the Seacole festival he never came near. He himself had no money this season, except a part of his salary in shares at the beginning of the season. Where was the money gone to? ("Oh! oh!" and hear, hear.)

Mr. TYLER would say that the money was taken up to his

room every night, and in the morning placed against the cheques and sent to the bank, and it was the same in the Seacole week.

M. JULLIEN.—This is wrong, for at the end of that week I went with this cheque (holding it up), and found nothing at the banker's. (Loud cheers and some confusion.)

Mr. FLEMING then moved a resolution to the effect that the gentlemen who were appointed to make an investigation into the accounts having made their report, it was considered necessary to make the strictest inquiry into the affairs of the company, and therefore a committee of investigation be formed of shareholders for that purpose, and generally to conduct the affairs of the company in its winding up, that the committee seek what professional assistance they may require, and that an application be made to the Court of Bankruptcy to get rid of that petition.

Mr. MACDONALD having seconded the motion, it was carried unanimously.

Several gentlemen having handed in subscriptions towards defraying the expenses of the movement,

The CHAIRMAN said he now rose to do a work of sympathy. However the shareholders might think their affairs to have been badly conducted, yet there was one gentleman who had not only been most anxious in his endeavours to promote the prosperity of the company, but he now was in this position, that, instead of receiving his salary, the cheques which had been given to him had been dishonoured at the bank; therefore not only was he deprived of his own money, but he had been placed in a very distressing position by not being able to pay his band. He therefore called on them to give M. Jullien a most cordial and hearty vote of thanks for the manner in which he had always endeavoured to promote the interests of the company, expressing with it, at the same time, the sympathy of the shareholders with his position.

The motion having been seconded and carried with acclamation,

M. JULLIEN rose, and, greatly affected, said he had been very miserably treated for the fifteen months that he had been connected with the company. He had found his thirty years' experience had here been thrown away. The directors had not understood his endeavours, excepting in the case of Mr. Beale and Mr. Chappell. For the past four or five months he had been very badly situated, for he had had to keep his poor fellows in the band for hours for their money, but he could not get his cheque for £2,000 through the bad management. Many of those poor fellows, only getting £2 a-week, and having had many years to learn their profession, had to wait for hours before they could get their money to get food for themselves and families. For himself, he had been called to the bosom of his family to rest, but he could not; he had commenced with this, and he would sink with it as the last man of a ship should do. (Cheers.) He had many times gone into the orchestra when told by his doctor that he would die, but he said it would be an honour to die in his orchestra. (Cheers.) It had been supposed he was rich, but he was not, for he had very heavy expenses to meet in obtaining new music and extending his orchestra. (Hear, hear.) He was a most economical man, for the cost of himself and family at home was not £2 a-week. He trusted to God, however, that the concern would next year succeed. He had spent a large fortune in one affair in establishing a national opera, and it had driven him to the Bankruptcy Court. He said he hoped he should never figure again in anything connected with bankruptcy.

The usual compliment to the chairman terminated the proceedings.

ADJOURNED MEETING AT THE BANKRUPTCY COURT.

(Before Mr. Commissioner FANE.)

This was an adjourned hearing of a petition under the Joint-Stock Companies' Act, 1856, to wind up the affairs of the company.

Mr. A. Jones, Mr. Chidley, Mr. Fleming, Mr. Linklater, Mr. F. W. Chappell, Mr. George, and Mr. Coombe appeared in the matter.

Mr. A. JONES said the directors were prepared to meet

any charges against them. He understood three affidavits had been filed.

Mr. FLEMING.—I appear for a large body of shareholders.

Mr. A. JONES.—I deny that.

Mr. FLEMING.—I appear for Mr. Nicholls and other shareholders.

Mr. JONES.—Mr. Nicholls is the holder of one share.

Mr. FLEMING.—That is sufficient to give him a right to be represented. I appear in support of resolutions passed by 63 shareholders.

Mr. COOMBE.—I am a solicitor and a shareholder, and appear as such.

Mr. James Coppock.—Perhaps your Honour will allow me, for myself and others, to state—

The COMMISSIONER.—Stop. I have stopped others. The proceedings must be conducted in proper order.

Mr. Coppock.—I should first—

The COMMISSIONER declined to allow Mr. Coppock to be heard at this stage of the proceedings, and asked Mr. Fleming and Mr. Coombe whether they were in favour of winding up, and received for an answer, "Decidedly not."

Mr. Coppock again wished to be heard.

The COMMISSIONER.—What is your name?

Mr. Coppock.—My name is Coppock. (A laugh.)

The COMMISSIONER.—You are a shareholder?

Mr. Coppock.—Yes, I am the largest shareholder in the company. I am also a solicitor. I am the holder of 1,100 shares. I am also a creditor of the company for between £400 and £500.

The COMMISSIONER.—That you assert?

Mr. Coppock.—Yes.

The COMMISSIONER.—And what is your wish?

Mr. Coppock.—I am for the winding up, and I wish to tell you what—

The COMMISSIONER.—Stop. I ought to hear Mr. Fleming first.

Mr. FLEMING.—I am against the order as prayed. I should be willing for an order to be made that would admit of the shareholders winding up the company themselves.

The COMMISSIONER.—I have nothing to do with winding up, except by this Court.

Mr. JONES suggested that M. Jullien could not be represented by both Mr. Chappell and Mr. Fleming.

Mr. CHAPPELL.—I appear as before for M. Jullien and several other shareholders.

Mr. FLEMING.—M. Jullien is present. He denies that. He says I appear for him.

M. JULLIEN.—Mr. Chappell is my legal adviser. If there be any clash between them I should wish—

The COMMISSIONER.—You seem to take part with Mr. Fleming and the 63 shareholders.

M. Jullien.—Yes.

The COMMISSIONER.—Then it would be unfair for Mr. Chappell to appear on your behalf. Will Mr. Chappell give the name of any other shareholder for whom he appears?

Mr. CHAPPELL.—Mr. Thomas Chappell.

Mr. Coppock.—Will you let me say a few words now?

The COMMISSIONER.—If Mr. Jones appears for the petitioner it is his duty to open the case.

Mr. JONES scarcely knew whether it was necessary for him to say anything, as it appeared to be the inclination of his Honour's mind at the last sitting to make an order in compliance with the prayer of the petition, verified as it was by an affidavit of Mr. Ellis, secretary of the company.

The COMMISSIONER.—Then you have asked for an order for winding up, and you sit down. (Laughter.)

Mr. JONES.—Yes. (A laugh.)

Mr. FLEMING said, if his Honour would allow M. Jullien to be examined it might be the best course, and would avoid much trouble. He might, however, proceed to state that since the last meeting the shareholders had taken steps to examine the company's accounts. They were in a complicated state, and it would take an accountant many days to make out from them a balance-sheet. He would refer the Court to the contents of affidavits that had been filed in support of the opposition to the winding-up order.

These affidavits are three in number.*

Mr. Fleming, without referring in any way to the contents of Mr. Coombe's affidavit, which was filed without remark or discussion, proceeded to read the affidavits of himself and Mr. Nelson Lee and another. All that is material in these affidavits is either embodied in the affidavit of Mr. Coombe, has been already given in other reports of proceedings that have appeared in *The Times*, or will be gathered from the discussion which they elicited.

Mr. JONES objected to a reference that he (Mr. Jones) had been the solicitor to the company. He had only acted as solicitor to the company since the 8th of August.

The COMMISSIONER (to Mr. Fleming).—You say that cash was not paid for about 1,200 shares?

Mr. FLEMING.—Instead of cash being paid shares were taken, so that, in fact, money was not paid.

The COMMISSIONER.—The value of the gardens represented 1,400 shares at £10 each, and the owner was the holder of those shares as fully paid up?

Mr. FLEMING.—Yes.

The COMMISSIONER.—I understand Mr. Coppock was the solicitor to the company. The gardens, at the commencement would owe to the company £14,000, and the amount was taken in shares.

Mr. FLEMING.—Yes. The company gave Mr. Tyler 1,400 shares of £10 each, and of these Mr. Coppock took 1,100, the real value of the premises at the time not being £2,000.

The COMMISSIONER.—You depose that you do not believe that the value of the property was £2,000!

Mr. FLEMING.—And if I had said not one farthing, it would have been nearer the mark. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. FLEMING proceeded to state that the rent of the gardens was £340, that the lease had only 11½ years to run, and that the gardens were subject to a heavy fine, payable to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, in addition to the annual rental.

The COMMISSIONER.—And you say that a splendid music-hall, etc., have been erected, which will be subject to a new heavy fine when the Dean and Chapter come round again. (A laugh.)

Mr. FLEMING.—Yes; and, under these circumstances, not only shareholders but creditors (Hear) join in requesting that the company may not be subjected to a compulsory winding-up. Shareholders believe that the company could be successfully carried on by a committee appointed by themselves. This is the opinion of Mr. Nelson Lee and other practical men engaged in theatrical occupations and as caterers for the public amusement. There are not at present directors sufficient to comply with the company's deed of partnership.

The COMMISSIONER.—Then have some of the directors ceased to be directors?

Mr. FLEMING.—Yes; the original number was six; three have resigned, and no number less than four can act.

Mr. Coppock.—That statement is simply untrue. There are four directors.

The COMMISSIONER.—Who are these?

Mr. Coppock.—Mr. Holmes, Mr. Baine, Mr. Webster, and myself.

Mr. FLEMING.—If there are four, all I can say is that some of them have disappeared.

Mr. Coppock.—That is untrue.

The COMMISSIONER.—I will leave the court if gentlemen will not learn how to conduct themselves in a court of justice.

Mr. FLEMING.—Since the gardens have in effect gone into other hands, they have filled every night, and a profit of between £200 and £300 has been already realised. I have now an offer from a party who will take the gardens for one month for £400, and pay the money down. (A laugh.) I say this because it is necessary in these times to have the money down. (Renewed laughter.)

The COMMISSIONER.—Have I any discretionary power? If I do not grant the required order, can I make any other order?

Mr. FLEMING cited the 72nd clause of the Act under which the petition was presented. It was there set forth that upon

* Mr. Coombe's affidavit shall appear in our next number.

the hearing of a petition presented by a contributory the court might dismiss the said petition, with or without costs, or "make such other order as to the court might seem just."

The COMMISSIONER.—What is the total number of shareholders?

Mr. SMITH.—193.

Mr. FLEMING.—And I have no doubt, if time be allowed for inquiry and investigation, that we shall have four-fifths of their number with us.

Mr. CHIDLEY said that he represented several shareholders and creditors who were desirous to have the company wound up out of court. He suggested that the 72nd section was intended to give this court a power analogous to that possessed by the Court of Chancery—that of instituting inquiry whether a company should be wound up or not. The court might refer the matter to its registrar or official assignee, and upon their report the court might decide whether a winding-up order should issue.

Mr. FLEMING.—I simply ask the court to dismiss the petition and leave the shareholders to take the course they think proper.

The COMMISSIONER.—If I take this course, who will have the control over the property?

Mr. JONES.—The directors.

Mr. FLEMING urged that the deed under which the company was formed provided that in certain cases the shareholders should have the power of dismissing the directors.

The COMMISSIONER.—You say this court is not asked to interfere until the shareholders are satisfied that this would be the best course. ("Yes, yes," "Hear, hear," and applause.) The question is whether the most judicious course would not be for you to ask me to allow the matter to stand over. (Hear, hear.) I say this without knowing the language of the deed.

Mr. FLEMING.—Mr. Jones will state what that is.

Mr. JONES.—I do not know it, I have never read the deed.

The COMMISSIONER (to Mr. Jones).—Are you the solicitor to the company?

Mr. JONES.—I wish to state—

The COMMISSIONER.—Are you the solicitor to the company?

Mr. JONES.—Yes; and your Honour will, I am sure, allow me to state the circumstances under which I have become so. Mr. Jones proceeded to state that on the third of the present month of August he was on his way to Greenwich by one of the steam-boats, when he accidentally met with Mr. Frederick Chappell. Mr. Chappell then told him that he (Mr. Chappell) was the solicitor to the company; that the company was all up; that it was being sued in every direction—among others by M. Jullien—and that it must go. He (Mr. Jones) having received this information went to his brother, a contributory, and being himself a shareholder also, it was agreed that he (Mr. Jones) should go down to Mr. Coppock. The affairs of the company were stated to be in a "terrible mess," and on the 6th of August Mr. Coppock saw himself (Mr. A. Jones) on the subject. Mr. Coppock then said,—"I don't mean to let Chappell have the winding up; will you act?" He (Mr. Jones) said he would. Mr. Coppock then said that prompt steps must be taken, without showing favour to any one. Among other pressing demands there were three on 12 days' writs on bills of exchange, to which no defence could be made. Prompt steps were thus necessary to give protection to the company.

The COMMISSIONER said no one who knew Mr. Jones would charge him with collusion, or doing anything that was not right.

Mr. FLEMING.—We make no imputation on Mr. Jones.

The COMMISSIONER.—The only question is what is the best course to take. The inclination of my mind is that the matter had better stand over. If the majority of the shareholders consider that the concern may be made profitable, they had better take such steps as they consider may enable them to put the management on a satisfactory footing.

Mr. FLEMING.—Your Honour has just stated the course that will be most agreeable to the shareholders for whom I appear.

The COMMISSIONER.—To obtain a winding-up order is practically rushing into bankruptcy—it is bankruptcy in name, if not in fact.

Mr. Charles Jeffreys, of 21, Soho-square, wished to put one question to Mr. Fleming.

Mr. FLEMING.—How many shares are you the holder of?

Mr. Jeffreys.—One share. (Laughter.) I wish to know whether the two gentlemen for whom Mr. Fleming appears (Mr. Beale and M. Jullien) were not directors at the time the dividend of 10 per cent. was declared?

Mr. FLEMING.—M. Jullien never was director, and Mr. Beale sent his resignation some months ago.

Mr. Coppock, on the part of the directors, who were the holders of more than one-half the shares of the company, wished to say a few words. 1,612 shares were held by the directors and their friends. (A voice, "And their friends.") The directors, it appeared, were the holders of very nearly one-half the shares of the company.

The COMMISSIONER.—Which directors?

Mr. JONES.—The names already given.

Mr. Coppock.—I will give them again.—Mr. Coppock, Mr. Baine, Mr. Holmes, and Mr. Webster.

After a short interruption, Mr. Coppock resumed.—He (Mr. Coppock) was the holder of 1,100 shares; his brother held 100; Mr. Baine, 50; Mr. Holmes, 25; Mr. Beale, 25; Mr. Wyld, M.P. for Bodmin, 25; and Mr. Henry Boddington Webster (who joined the company only last Christmas) 50 shares. Charges had been made against himself (Mr. Coppock) which had given him the greatest pain. He had never received so much as a shilling of the company's money. Not any one of the directors had received so much as a shilling, and none had gone for any other purposes than those of the company. He repudiated every charge made against him, and he challenged the fullest inquiry. Charges had been made by persons who ought to blush for their conduct—by persons from whom he could read letters suggesting cooked accounts and the management of places. Allusion had even been made to criminal proceedings—criminal proceedings for what? The circumstance would be a lesson to him. He had advanced money beyond the amount of his shares. He had never sold or trafficked in the company's shares; he had never parted with one share. The fact was that, from certain circumstances, the receipts of the gardens during the present season had been £12,000 less than might have been expected. He and the other directors had done their duty fairly and honestly, and he had no other object in view. He believed that the property was a valuable property. He thought that a winding-up order would be the best course to take for making the best of the property; but he was quite willing to agree to any course that the court might approve. He would not, however, allow his character to be assailed, and his reputation damned, when the only error he had fallen into was an error in judgment.

The COMMISSIONER.—The best course is for the shareholders to consider the matter. If the majority should then say, "Let us have a winding-up order," I can have no objection. The creditors, I should think, are quite safe.

Mr. FLEMING.—Yes. Creditors to the amount of £10,000 have sanctioned the course which I appear to support.

Mr. JONES.—No.

Mr. Coppock.—How many shares do the sixty-three holders represent?

Mr. FLEMING.—I cannot say.

M. Jullien.—I am the holder of shares to the amount of £2,000, a larger amount than that held by the whole of the directors except one.

After some discussion, Mr. COOMBE suggested that the directors should call a meeting.

The COMMISSIONER.—Suppose that they should then request the directors to resign, will they do so?—No answer.

The COMMISSIONER asked whether the solicitor for the company could state the terms contained in the deed?

Mr. CHAPPELL.—I drew the deed, but I really do not recollect its terms.

Mr. Coppock said one of its provisions was that there must not be less than four directors who were the holders of not less than twenty-five shares each. This number could not be found among the entire body of shareholders if the present directors were to withdraw.

Mr. FLEMING said that if a winding-up order were granted, the shareholders wished to know where their property would go to, and how they were to obtain the information that they desired.

The COMMISSIONER.—An official liquidator would be appointed under any winding-up order, and he could get at everything.

Mr. Coppock said he and the other directors asked for a winding-up order in this court, as the best mode of instituting due inquiry, and protecting their characters.

Mr. COOMBE said the affidavit he had made contained facts which were most extraordinary. He wanted time, that was all.

The COMMISSIONER.—You shall have that.

Mr. JONES.—The directors are willing that any gentleman shall be put in nomination to act as joint liquidator.

The COMMISSIONER.—I have no power to appoint more than one liquidator. The best course is to order an adjournment.

Mr. JONES applied, under the 84th clause, for an order restraining actions; also for an order appointing a receiver.

The COMMISSIONER acceded.

Mr. GEORGE applied for an order that Mrs. Seacole might be permitted to investigate the company's accounts so far as they referred to the receipts of a benefit on Mrs. Seacole's behalf. She wanted to go to India, but was prevented by the position of her affairs with the company.

Mr. Coppock.—May I ask for whom you appear?

Mr. GEORGE.—For Mrs. Seacole.

Mr. Coppock said the directors had never taken the slightest part in the transactions referred to. So many false representations and scandalous imputations had been made in reference to the matter, that he might say the secretary had been directed to furnish Mrs. Seacole with every information she required, and that her claim would be satisfied.

Mr. GEORGE.—Mrs. Seacole told me only yesterday that no account had been received.

The COMMISSIONER ordered an adjournment to Saturday, the 17th of October.

M. Julien said he could have wished, before the proceedings had closed, to say a few words that would throw a light on the whole affair. He would, however, for the present remain silent.

A crowded and somewhat angry and disorderly meeting then separated.

A NEW ART.—The *France Musicale* gives an interesting account of some experiments made in presence of the Emperor, when at Plombières, to test the efficacy of M. Sudre's plan for transmitting signals to the troops of an army or navy, by means of musical sounds. Placing himself in the middle of the saloon, he announced that he would with his violin express any phrase his Majesty might please to dictate to him, in such a manner as to enable Madame Sudre, who was seated at the further end of the room, among a group of ladies, to say what it meant. The Emperor immediately wrote on a piece of paper the words, *Le premier que fut roi fut un soldat heureux*, and M. Sudre produces a few sounds from his violin. Madame Sudre immediately rose and repeated the phrase word for word. Another experiment was then made—it consisted in *speaking* the notes instead of *playing* them. The Emperor wrote *Plombières est une ville charmante ce soir*, and M. Sudre, after reading the phrase, pronounced, without any intonation of voice, certain notes. Madame Sudre at once gave the words correctly. Experiments in *éléphonie* were made. M. Sudre's system reduces the transmission of signals to three sounds expressed by the trumpet, the drum, or the cannon; or in the event of high winds preventing sounds from being heard, to three signs. The Emperor gave the order "Construct batteries on the height," and M. Sudre produced three sounds on the clarion; Madame Sudre at once repeated the phrase. By the Emperor's order the phrase *Il fait horriblement chaud* was written, and M. Sudre, spreading out the fingers of his left hand, which were supposed to represent musical notes, with the finger of his right hand pointed to some of them. Madame Sudre, without a second's delay, pronounced the phrase aloud. A still more curious experiment followed—the act of making a blind person communicate with a deaf and dumb one. M. Sudre, taking his wife's hand, touched her fingers, and enabled her to repeat the question—*Quelle est la vertu des eaux de Plombières?* which the Emperor wrote. The Emperor expressed himself completely satisfied.

MDLLE. VICTOIRE BALFE.

(From the *Belfast Mercury*.)

MDLLE. BALFE made her first appearance on this occasion as a concert singer before a Belfast audience; and we can confidently state that no lady ever appeared to the musical public of Belfast who attained greater success. Her reception was most enthusiastic, and was marked with more unconstrained warmth than is usually observable among concert-goers. Whether it was owing to the novelty of singing for the first time in a concert-room, or to natural timidity, the first few notes of "Come per me sereno" indicated something approaching to a nervous expression; but the fervour, delicacy, freshness, and brilliant effect that burst upon the ear after the recitative in the allegro aria, at once established Mdle. Balfé's rank amongst the greatest sopranis of the present day. To enter into a critical analysis of the different productions given by this gifted young lady, would obviously be unnecessary; from the first to the last of the concert she held, as if spell-bound, the delighted listeners.

(From the *Liverpool Post*.)

The first appearance of a prima donna is always an interesting feature in a performance, and becomes doubly so when the fair *débütante* is one who not only claims our sympathy on the score of being a country-woman, but possesses in an eminent degree those qualities which most adorn the sex—a charming exterior, graceful carriage, and unpresuming modesty of demeanour. We are sure all who witnessed the appearance of Mdle. Balfé, last night, in the rôle of Amina, will admit that she displayed each and all these qualities so necessary to a satisfactory impersonation of the part. We have seldom seen a vocalist who enlisted more of our sympathies, or so well deserved our applause. Her voice is a veiled soprano of moderate power and compass, and her singing throughout bespoke careful culture. Some of her cadenzas were not more eloquent than difficult; and her correct reading of the part was alike creditable to her good taste and in thorough keeping with our conceived ideas of the character. The applause of a critical audience, which greeted Mdle. Balfé at many points of the opera, and resulted in a recall at the end of each act, testifies to the favourable impression which she created, and justifies the praise we so gladly accord to her.

ITALIAN OPERA IN OXFORD-STREET.

On Monday evening Mr. Beale's operatic corps (selected from the two rival houses, and sundry other quarters) took possession of the stage of the Princess's Theatre, in the presence of a numerous audience. The performances have continued throughout the week, and will terminate on Saturday next. Among the principal attractions are Grisi, Gassier, and Alboni, Mario, Reichardt, and Formes, and a new contralto, Madame Bernardi. The most crowded houses have been drawn by the *Traviata*, *Rigoletto*, and *Lucrezia Borgia*. We can only at present record the first appearance of Madame Bernardi, who filled the part of Maffeo Orsini in the *Lucrezia Borgia*, on Thursday evening. Her success was unequivocal, and the encore which she received in the "Brindisi," as enthusiastic as the applause with which she was recalled at the fall of the curtain.

Grisi and Mario have been in good voice on all occasions except on Monday evening, when the latter was suffering from hoarseness.

The prices of admission are according to the scale prevalent at the end of the season.

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